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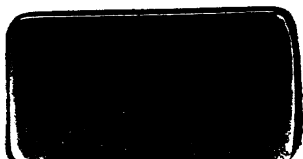
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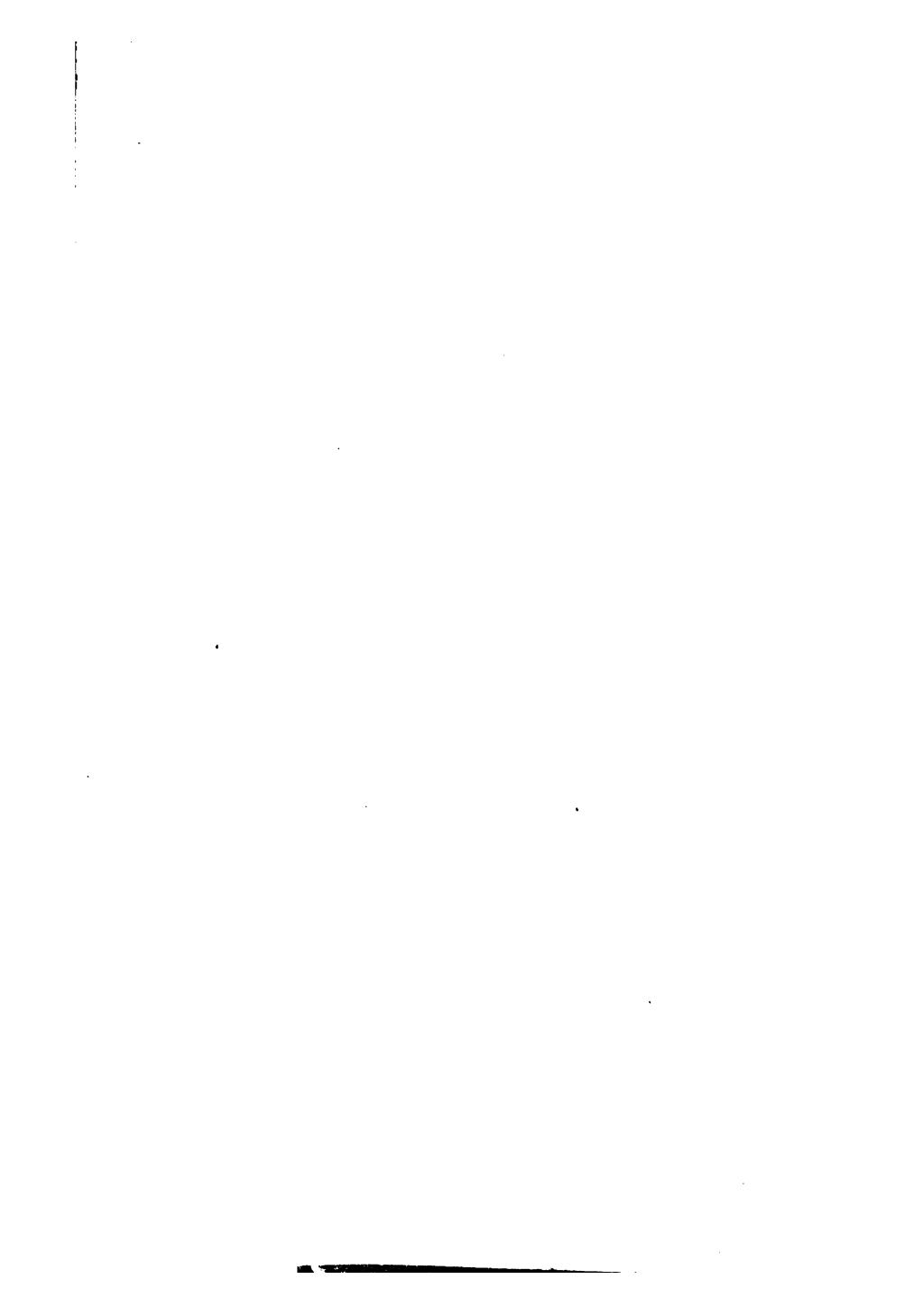
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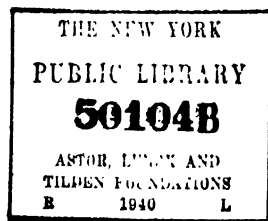
RUSHING BEHIND HIS EXCELLENCY, ONE OF THE RASCALS RAISED HIS CUTLASS.

THE
GALLEON TREASURE

BY
PERCY K. FITZHUGH



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If still, forsooth, some homely page
Of olden folk in homely style
May e'en in this progressive age
An idle hour or two beguile.

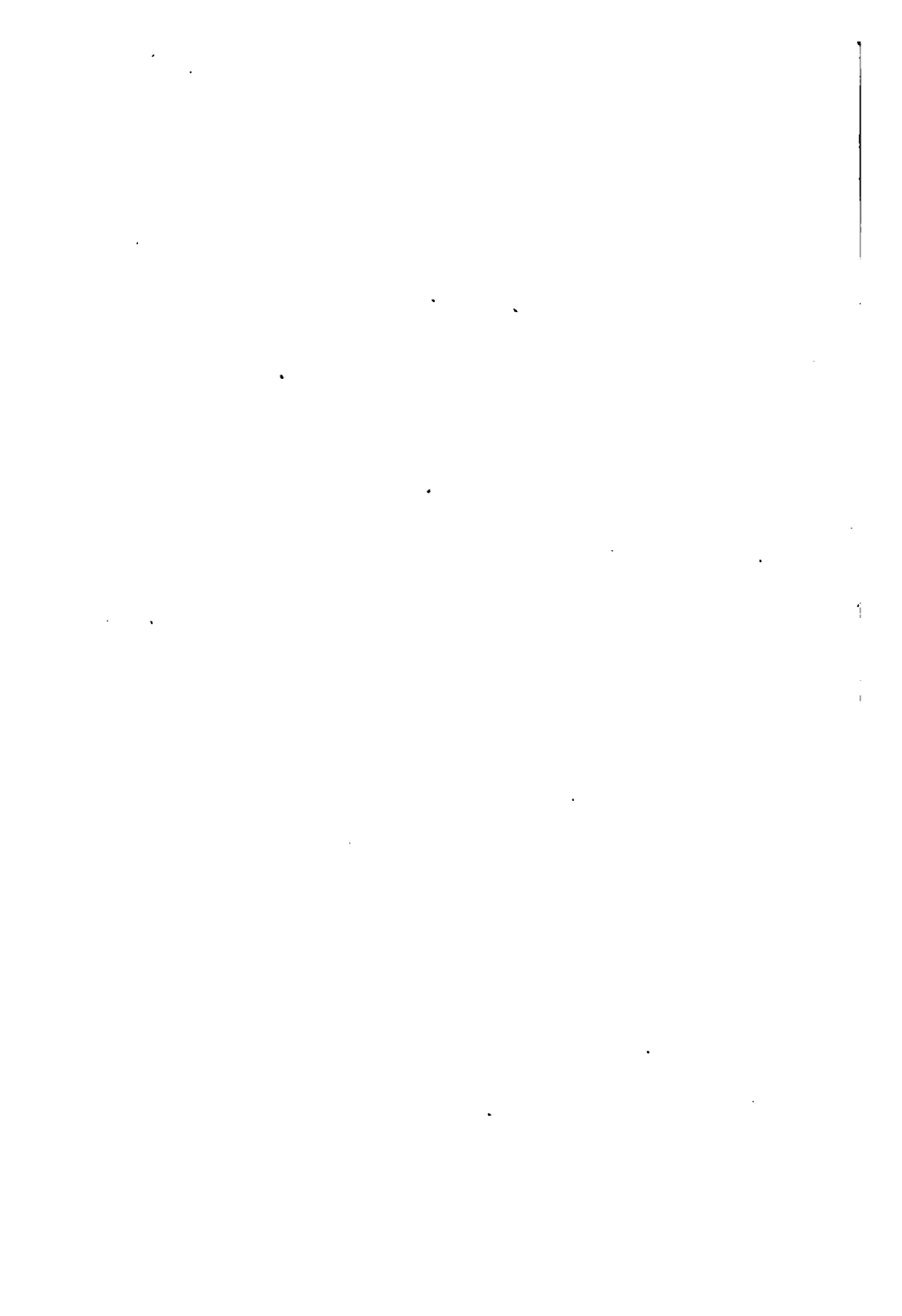
Why, here's a story of our land
And e'en a truthful episode,
Though wrought without a stylist's hand,
Nor written in the latest mode.

And still, methinks, though reft of art,
You'll see the lass with olden ways
Was much the same in thought and heart
As maids in these ungodly days.

And well I ken your lads of old
Would run away from book or game,
To do brave deeds, or hear them told—
And lads to-day are just the same.

And so fall to and fear ye not
The sombreness of olden phrase,
Nor look ye on their homely lot
But rather on their human ways.

For e'en though fickle custom kill
The homely ways, all prim and strange,
And fashions change, as fashions will,
The heart of youth will never change.



CONTENTS.

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. IN WHICH THE OLD MAN BECOMES YOUNG AGAIN	7
II. IN WHICH SATAN BECOMES VERY BUSY.....	12
III. IN WHICH WE GET THE OPINION OF AN EXPERT	32
IV. IN WHICH THE ROYAL GOVERNOR HAS A GREAT LAUGH.....	43
V. IN WHICH I HAVE AN ADVENTURE.....	59
VI. IN WHICH I PRETEND TO BE A FAMOUS PER- SONAGE.....	78
VII. IN WHICH I HEAR SOMETHING OF INTEREST..	88
VIII. IN WHICH I SPEND AN UNGODLY SABBATH...	104
IX. IN WHICH I DO SOME CONJURING.....	125
X. IN WHICH I MINGLE WITH THE MIGHTY.....	144
XI. IN WHICH SIR HARRENDEN SURPRISES ME...	155
XII. IN WHICH WE PUT FORTH AFTER SIR EDWARD..	171
XIII. IN WHICH WE HAVE SOME VISITORS.....	184
XIV. IN WHICH WE USE OUR WITS INSTEAD OF WEAPONS.....	208
XV. IN WHICH MISERY HAS COMPANY.....	237
XVI. IN WHICH I BID YOU FAREWELL.	255

ILLUSTRATIONS.

RUSHING BEHIND HIS EXCELLENCY, ONE OF THE
RASCALS RAISED HIS OUTLASS (p. 201), *Frontispiece*

	PAGE
"HATH THE DEVIL EVER APPEARED TO THEE?" HE ASKED	72
HE PRICKED ME IN THE LEGS SO THAT I WAS FAINT TO DANCE	118
"UP WITH THY HANDS, MY MAN!"	230



THE GALLEON TREASURE.

CHAPTER I.

IN WHICH THE OLD MAN BECOMES YOUNG
AGAIN.

BEING frequently asked by my sister's grandchildren and some of their companions to discourse with them, on wet days, about certain things I was concerned in when I was a young boy in this fair colony of Massachusetts Bay, I am minded to set down some of the happenings and transactions of the year sixteen hundred and ninety-two and thereabouts, being particular to tell you in the first place that I am not much at the writing like my old friend, the Reverend Cotton Mather, nor much bestowed with wit like our Mr. Franklin to-day, but a blunt, plain-spoken man and

something of a dullard withal, though strong and active at eighty-one years, under God's blessing.

And if some of these things that I here set down bring a fairer moiety of credit unto my sister Mercy than to myself and make her life and thoughts to be of livelier concern, it is none of my doing, but the doing of circumstances under Divine Guidance. And I hope that I may give these recountings with proper meekness and free from boastings. But I will not have you to be alarmed lest I talk in sermons and give my tale over to preachings and precepts for young ears, as our godly Dr. Mather was fain to do when I was a young lad, for in truth it is common talk with the good people here in Salem, how I can pick the laughter out of a solemn thing like the meat out of a hickory nut, and a matter of much marvel that I am from sober Puritan stock, seeing my disposition to worldly things and to make merry with young people.

OLD MAN BECOMES YOUNG AGAIN. 9

But it is a truth that I am descended on my mother's side from Master John Endicott, who berated and whipped the poor Quakers when he was governor of Naumkeag, now our goodly town of Salem, which he settled and lived in for twenty-seven years without so much as laughing once in all that time—according to my mother.

Howsoever that may be, I am of a different mind to many of my old kinsfolk and neighbors, and not much given to solemn thoughts and pondering on graves and tombstones, seeing that there will be a generous mort of time for these things when I am snug inside of one and underneath the other, which will bear my name in plain letters,—Determined Corwin.

So, having given you my word not to thrust a moral at you like a tomahawk when you are not looking to it, nor to burthen you with account of my forebears—who, to my thinking, were gloomy and unhappy men—I will take you back unto the time when I was fourteen years old,

and living with my dear sister, Mercy, at the house of my father, who was the worshipful magistrate, Master Jonathan Corwin, of Salem.

That was the year sixteen hundred and ninety-one, which was the time when King James the Second ran away from his throne, and renowned moreover as the year that Dr. Increase Mather, who was the father of Cotton, went to England to plead for a new charter and a new governor before King William of Orange and his good queen, Mary. And right heartily surprised we were withal at the kind of governor he brought us home to rule over our fair province.

Now when I harken to you young stripplings and maidens gossiping anent these colonies coming to have a hand in the making of their own laws, and e'en sending their representatives to the Parliament, I am minded to laugh outright at such absurdities until I fall a-pondering on the strange transactions that befell in the reign

OLD MAN BECOMES YOUNG AGAIN. 11

of that new governor, and recollect how anything is like to come to pass in this queer land. And it may be that Mr. Franklin is over right in his apprehendings, though my mind misgives me he will hang on the gibbet with some others for high treason before he is done, though God grant I may not live to see it. For these eyes have looked on killing and bloodshed enow for one life, as you will soon know if you give an ear to this narrative.

CHAPTER II.

IN WHICH SATAN BECOMES VERY BUSY.

MINDFUL of my promise not to weary you with musings and ponderings, I will begin by telling you that at that time our good town of Salem was sore afflicted with as great a curse as ever visited this land, seeing that many of the godliest among us were accused of witchcraft, or, as that meant, going into partnership with the devil, so that the jails in Salem and Boston and Ipswich were crowded with these people waiting to be tried before the General Court of Massachusetts. I can very well remember how that every person walked in fear lest he be accused, for any among us could cry out on his neighbor who would so be arrested without warrant.

Now as a consequence of these evils, there was no peace among us in the village,

for every day some evidences were brought to the magistrates, and many times to my father on account of his fair repute, touching those who had been accused. And my father had in custody a goodly pile of papers and letters and evil charms such as pins and pieces of looking-glass wherewith the converts to Satan were pleased to ply their unholy trade, and which the tithing-men and deacons in the church had taken from them to confound them with when they should be brought to trial.

Since that sad time, I have come to know, with all mankind, that in truth we committed a grievous error, seeing that there are no witches and never will be any, but in that time we were afflicted with God's displeasure in many ways—with Indian wars and with mortal sickness—and we knew not how to redeem ourselves before Heaven but to wage war with those who had brought this grievous pass upon us by their communings with the devil. For when I was a stripling here, everything

which our people could not understand had an evil purport and it much behooved the good men of our village to disport themselves with all humility and to say nothing unusual nor to express their meanings saving in a plain and God-fearing manner.

It chanced that in the midst of these mysterious happenings and misfortunes, when the devil in very truth seemed to stalk among us at night, winning the best of our youths and maidens into his infernal band, and when the sternness of the magistrates and the prayers of the good ministers availed not against him, that I was on my way home from the Bird's Nest Tavern on the Danvers Road, one evening, when hearing a sound like the breaking of branches in the woods beside me, I turned and saw in the thicket four black objects creeping along with great stealth, though not clear enough to say whether they were man or beast, except that they went one behind another in a straight row instead of prowling after the manner of wild things. They

were a good distance in from the road and it being well-nigh dark I saw them for only a minute, though long enough to make my young bones quake with dread, and I hastened on along the road and was right glad, I'll warrant you, when I reached my father's house in the village. I had purposed to tell this strange thing to my father as soon as I should be safe at home, but he had gone to bed and I did not see him to hold any converse until after we had held our prayers in the morning. Then I followed him into his study and was about to speak to him when we both saw that there sat a tithing-man waiting to see him, whose face was very much distraught and who held a paper in his hand.

"Your worshipful honor," said he, rising, "Mr. Peabody beseeches me to hand you this paper and before giving your thought to it to hear how it was found."

My father took the paper from the tithing-man, whose hand trembled hugely and whose face was of the color of a new sail.

I can never forget as long as I live the look on my father's face while he read this paper over and over and then laid it on his table. For in very truth, if his two children, my sister Mercy and myself, had been taken from him of a sudden by God's will, I doubt his features could have been no more distraught with pain and sorrow, and as for fear and terror they were upon him now as I had never seen before.

"How was it found?" he said to the tithing-man in a very strange voice.

"By one of our good townspeople, Master Calen," said the tithing-man, "who was digging for clams in the early morning hour. Having filled his basket in a space along the shore, he was starting for his home when he espied under a great willow tree a clam stuck underneath a stone as if it had been washed up in the tide and lodged there. Being one of a goodly size, he went out of his path to the tree and wrenching it out from under a corner of the rock, he threw it in his basket, and

SATAN BECOMES VERY BUSY. 17

arrived home shortly, it still being earlier than five o'clock. Soon after this his wife sat her down to open the clams, throwing the shells into an earthenware vessel, when she came to one of goodly size out of which fell this paper, folded small.

"She cried out to her husband, excited beyond measure at this strange thing that had happened, and picking up the paper, they read it together and brought it to the Reverend Master Peabody, he being their neighbor."

"Where is the shell?" asked my father.

"It lieth still on the floor in Master Calen's house, for none would touch it."

"And Master Calen—where is he? And his wife?" my father asked, trying to keep in his fear and excitement.

"Good sooth, they were clapped in prison lest they have some greater knowledge of this evil thing than they tell," answered the tithing-man.

Now all this time that the tithing-man was recounting this unholy affair I strained

my neck to get a glimpse of the paper, but it was mostly covered by a Bible which my father had laid on it with much shrewdness to take away its evil power if might be, and I could not make out to see its purport.

"I am of a mind," said my father, who was still much perturbed, "that it much behooveth us to pray with more fervor that this evil thing may be averted before our good town is wholly lost. I fear me we have not given a sufficient thought to the devil and his works and that he fast gaineth power among our people. I would fain give these prisoners an examination before me this day, for it seemeth me they are like to be innocent of any concern in this matter, yet will I hold no examination to-day but will give this day to the Lord, for he only can clear us of these mysteries."

The tithing-man now went away, and my father, without so much as noticing me in my chair, sat him down as if he were weary with such great responsibility and

put his head in his hand and said not a word. In truth, it was not a time for much talking. My good father had committed a full score of our townspeople to the jail and yet the evil went on spreading like a plague and nothing seemed to avail us against it, and we were silent with dread and terror. There was no word spoken for full ten minutes and I did not dare to move, but sat waiting. Then my father turned and said,

“What is it, Determined? Had you something to discourse about?”

Then I told him of the four dark objects I had seen the night before, though I noticed he was not surprised at it, but nodded gravely and said nothing at all. Then he told me to call my sister Mercy into the study. When she came her face was much troubled, for we were not used with being called to my father's study in such manner.

“Shut the door, Determined,” said my father, and when I had done so my sister Mercy and myself stood on the other side

of the table from where he sat and waited for him to speak.

"My children," said he, in a very serious way, "this is an evil day that we have awakened to, and it must be given to prayer. Is your spinning finished, Mercy?"

She said it was, and going around the table, she laid her arms about his neck, in that affectionate way she ever had, and asked him what was the matter. He pointed to the note saying that it had been found, but not telling her in what manner, so we both read it as it lay on the table. This is what it said, for as long as I live I can never forget the words, though, truth to tell, as I write them down now they do not seem so filled with evil purport.

"Infernal Majesty here. Maid in yesterday. Did not trouble. Other later—has it all from reports—get irons by the Saturday and make place. Come Saturday night. Keep caldron close. Rough overhauling. †"

When we had read the note, my sister Mercy kneeled down at my father's feet

looking up into his face, and I could see that she was very much afraid. I do not remember when I had ever seen her looking so beautiful as she did then, but her face was troubled.

“Father,” she said, “I know how much weighty concerns you have in this evil time, and I am minded to fear lest I have helped to bring these troubles for I have given much thought to the world, not setting my mind on God’s kingdom, and my soul is black in the sight of Him who is Almighty, and I do beseech you, my father, for your prayers.”

My father seemed very much troubled, seeing her fear, and he stroked her head and told us both that we must pray that our new governor, who must be now arrived, would be a God-fearing man who would have the witches tried and punished before they could win any more converts unto their master. Then he took the evil paper up and put it with the other evidences he had of the devil’s work, and put

them under a large Bible that stood on the table. Then we prayed together for a little space that our new land might not be annexed to Satan's kingdom. After this we left him alone and went out where the bright sun was shining.

That very night a most dreadful thing came to pass in the village, so that on hearing of it the town was in a turmoil of fear and terror and all sank down upon their knees to pray.

In the middle of the night Goodman Proctor, a blacksmith and a godly man living out of the village a little way on the Danvers Road, was touched on the head as he lay asleep in his house and on waking he beheld four dark figures in long, black cloaks standing along beside his bed.

"Rise up," said one of them, and Goodman Proctor, quaking with fright, rose from his bed. Then the one who had spoken told him to make haste and put on his clothes and follow them whither they should lead him without so much as asking

the reason for this strange summons. So he dressed himself, not daring to disobey their commands but praying all the while, and followed them out into the darkness. He did not stop praying once for he feared that he was being led to some witch meeting, knowing these dark objects to be subjects of the evil one and doing his bidding. What was Goodman Proctor's surprise when they led him down the road to his own forge and made him open the door—but he could hardly put the key in the lock, as he told afterward, on account of his terror.

Then when they had all come within the shop, they made him light a candle, and ordered him to start his fire and forge some iron manacles and handcuffs as they should direct him. So he lit his fire and fell to blowing his bellows while they sat silent and watched him. All through the rest of that night did Goodman Proctor stand at his forge fashioning rough handcuffs as they had ordered him and his

ghostly customers said not a word to him while he worked. When he had finished this strange work, they collected all he had made and put them into a horse's feed bag.

"Wilt thou join the devil?" then said one, at which Goodman Proctor trembled so that his teeth chattered. The forge fire was now fast dying down and there was no light in the place but a few sparks on the forge and the candle.

"Wilt thou join the devil, Goodman Proctor?" asked the figure, again, pointing a long finger at him. They now formed a little circle about him and the poor blacksmith stood in the middle of it in mortal dread but with his thoughts fixed on God.

"Wilt thou join the devil, Goodman Proctor? Answer," said the figure again, and they all stared at him with a fiendish look.

"Never!" said Goodman Proctor, as he sank upon his knees and began to pray aloud.

Then they all laughed right heartily

and whispered to each other and started away with the feed bag full of manacles, leaving the poor blacksmith on the floor with his hands clasped and praying to be delivered from these lost souls. In the morning when his good wife missed him from her side the neighbors made a search and found him in his shop, his hair turned snow white and crying for a Bible and for one of the good ministers.

On hearing of this evil thing, the whole town was so distraught with fear that the churches were opened for public prayer, notwithstanding it was not a service day, and no one left his home save those who went in obedience to their callings or to the meeting-house for prayer and meditation. My father told my sister Mercy and myself not to go away from our home, and he was locked in his study all through the day receiving the ministers, and Mr. Hathorne, the other worshipful magistrate, stayed with him.

I mind me how my sweet sister and I

crept out of the house and around to the study window and looked in from the garden to see what they were doing inside, but all we could make out was that my father and Mr. Hathorne had all the papers and trinkets spread before them and were talking in a very excited way with three or four ministers. I wondered when they would hold the examination of Master Calen and his wife, who were in jail, for my sister and I could not bear to think of them in such a plight, believing that they were innocent of any wrong.

Now, to our great astonishment, when evening came did my father call my sister and me into his study again and say that he would take us with him to Boston the next day if we were minded to go, for the reason, as I have since come to know, that he feared we might come to be in some manner concerned in the evil proceedings and get ourselves cried out upon as witches or "brands of Satan" as our learned Cotton Mather called them. So he bethought him

that it would be better to take us away from our town which was in such a grievous case. But he counselled Mercy not to carry with her any jewelry or trinkets and such like heathenish adornments wherewith to attract the young men of Boston, but to dress herself in simple attire as befitted a maiden. And having counselled her in this wise, he coughed deeply so as to change his voice into a gruff and dreadful tone as the better way in which to admonish me. And then he conjured me that if I did not comport myself with soberness and propriety in Boston town, he would without doubt give me to the authorities there to be stood in the pillory and trounce me soundly by way of rounding out the punishment when we should come home to Salem again, and besides have my name posted on the meeting-house door as a malefactor.

I promised him that I would not give myself over to frivolous pastimes nor to strutting about the town, but would

disport myself meekly and with serious thoughts. And having promised him in this wise, I went to my sister's room while she was in the kitchen, and put together in a pillion case all of her rings and earrings and her silver locket, and her pretty love-hood, and such gear as maidens love, knowing well that she would not take them with her as my father had bade her leave them behind, and wanting her to have them in Boston if a chance should come for her to show herself against the Boston maidens who were famed for their gaiety, often staying up and carousing as late as nine o'clock at night, according to the accounts in the Boston Gazette, which was printed every Wednesday. And then I rolled up as carefully as a boy might her flowered silk gown into a tight bundle and tucked it in under the seat of the chaise cart.

The next morning we started out in the old chaise, I being fourteen years old as I have before set down, and my sister Mercy sixteen, though not yet betrothed nor like

to find a suitor until now, perchance, notwithstanding her fair countenance and gracefulness and that she was well into the age for marrying, according to the custom in those days.

We were to go to Judge Sewall's house, and my sister and I were to tarry in the town for the length of about a week or until after the Sabbath, so that we might go to the South Church and hear Dr. Mather's preaching, seeing his great renown for learning. But my father was to return to Salem as soon as he had been presented to the governor, on account of the grave matters needing his attention. He had brought with him all the evil proofs from his study table to show to the new governor and talked much on the journey to the effect that he hoped His Excellency would be a God-fearing man and realize the evil that hung over our fair village.

Now, if any had told me that I would not, in very truth, set eyes on my home again for a good five weeks, and then only

after such an adventure as a God-fearing stripling had never seen the like of, I'll warrant he would have been cried out on for evil prophesyings and communion with the powers of darkness. But it was all the fault of that new governor, whose memory I do still hold in much reverence and love even in face of the ungodly repute which he gained among some of our good people. For in truth, we had never seen the colony administered by such an one before, our royal governors being sedate and stern men, comporting themselves with high dignity, as befits the king's friends and servants, and going about with high bearing and talking in formal discourse. But Sir William Phipps was a seafaring man of many adventures who had been kindly favored by the king seeing how he had lately raised some goodly treasure from a sunken galleon in the West Indies, and had dutifully fetched it to London to the king, receiving for himself a heavy share amounting to a goodly fortune. But

he had received from the monarch at the same time the order of a knight being thenceforward called "Sir", a title which he was at great trouble to carry about with him and use in its proper fashion, on account of his plain tastes and bearing.

When we were passing through the main streets of Lynn, the news was spread abroad of his arrival and we hastened along with the more speed to greet him and to lay these weighty matters to his consideration. For my father and Mr. Hathorne were desirous to set an ensample by punishing those who had turned witches with hanging them in some public place. And besides this the jails were crowded to the doors and there was no place to keep the accused.

CHAPTER III.

IN WHICH WE GET THE OPINION OF AN
EXPERT.

Now when we came into the city it was near time for noon meat, and we were stopped by a tithing-man with a long staff who stalked out from a little house, saying,

"Who goes there?" at the same time laying hold of our horse's bridle.

"I am Judge Corwin, from Salem town," said my father.

"And these be your children?" asked the tithing-man.

"Thou speakest truly," quoth my father, "wherefore are we detained?"

The tithing-man looked at us mightily for full two minutes, as it seemed to me, seeming to take full note of all that we had about us, and then he said with somewhat of stately ceremony.

"It is the order of the City Council that any coming from Salem must go to Mr. Mather's house to be searched by his servant for trinkets and evil signs, and to be catechised moreover by Mr. Mather as a precaution against bringing any witching influences into this town, but seeing thee to be a magistrate, on thy word I will let thee pass."

So we drove on, I being much filled with thankfulness at this deliverance from the famous reverend minister, and I opine my sister Mercy was of the same thought. More by token, I was seized with a sudden misgiving lest the flowered silk gown be in some manner discovered under the chaise cart seat.

We journeyed to Judge Sewall's house, which stood in Rawson's Lane, and we noted that there was much excitement in the streets as we went along. Men and women stood in groups talking and there was much whispering and gossiping through the town which I set down to be on

account of the landing of the new governor.

We drove straightway to Mr. Sewall's house, and were received with much comfortableness by Mistress Betty and her mother, but the judge was holding a private discourse with the Reverend Mr. Mather in his study. Mistress Betty was of my sister's age, and had a very pretty fashion with her tongue, though not so fair according to my thinking, but she made us a dainty courtsey, such as our Salem maids could never do with such gracefulness, and took us into the sitting-room. Before very many minutes Judge Sewall came out from his study, and behind him came Mr. Mather. Now, I had many times heard a jibe of the boys in Salem running to the effect that Mr. Mather was so borne down with godliness and learning that it increased his weight a number of pounds, and verily it seemed when I looked upon him that this must have some truth in it, for his headpiece was so large that his two

limbs were become bow-legged in consequence—or so it beseemed me—of having to sustain it. I mind me how that Master Warren, in Salem, who was over fond of making jibes and renowned among us stripplings for his witty jests, told me that the Reverend Cotton Mather was like unto a full sponge, and that if one should make so bold as to squeeze him, streams of learning would ooze out, seeing the abundance of knowledge and reading he had stored within him. Now, I being ever but a scapegrace, all these things caused me to gaze at the famous minister with much awe, and the more so as he was of a very stern countenance. Well I wot that Mistress Betty and my sister were heartily afraid of him and as for me, I was well-nigh struck dumb with terror at his presence.

After a few words had passed between the elders and my father had made us known to Mr. Mather, Judge Sewall suggested that it would be much to their be-

hoof to betake themselves again into the study where the matter of affairs at Salem could be shrewdly pressed.

"Now," said my father, speaking to these gentlemen, "besides the papers I would fain submit and consider with you thereon, this lad of mine hath witnessed a strange sight which I would fain have him rehearse in your private hearing."

At this, Mr. Mather looked at me very sharply, and asked me if I went much in swimming.

I answered that I did with my father's leave.

"Do you sink or float on the surface?" he asked me in a very quick, short manner.

"I sink when I do not swim," I replied in great trepidation.

"That is well," said he, glancing toward my father. "If he were in a way of being bewitched, he would float. This is a sign to trust in."

It beseeemed me that these words troubled my father and I know that they troubled

my sister Mercy, but as haply my answer pleased the learned doctor, there was nothing more said. Judge Sewall, who was a ponderous man and wore a little red velvet cap, led the way and we followed him into the study, leaving Dame Sewall with my sister and Mistress Betty in the sitting-room.

Beshrew me if I ever saw three honest gentlemen of such sad and solemn looks as my father and Judge Sewall and Mr. Cotton Mather, as they sate around the Judge's little table that day. As for me, I did not dare to sit down at all in such company, but stood shifting from one of my feet to the other and arranging my doublet.

"I would fain know," said Mr. Mather, "of the inroads the evil one hath made among you that we may straighten this coil. It is my belief that the rampant minions of Satan should be burned at the stake, youth and maid, man and woman, as a sacrifice to the common weal."

Then did my father untie his bundle of

papers, showing the two worthies all the evidences of witchcraft that had been brought to him in Salem. Mr. Mather took up each one and examined it and handed it to Mr. Sewall with some solemn word anent its wickedness. There were glass beads and coins and papers bearing strange figures, and the reports of several examinations of suspected witches, with their answers by way of defence. And then there were letters from many who were suspected, claiming their innocence.

"How many of these are in jail?" asked Mr. Mather.

"All of them," answered my father.

"It hath dwelt shrewdly on the minds of our principal men," said Mr. Mather, as he examined the evidences and passed them on to Judge Sewall, "that our new governor is not of a mind to see deeply into these evils; there is in very truth the stench of Satan in all of them; these little looking-glasses are in common use among the witches. Any man or woman in the

colony found with such a looking-glass should be burned into ashes. Ah, what is toward here ? ”

He had come to the letter found in the clam-shell which my father told him about in great detail and then he had me tell about seeing the four dark figures in the woods, and after that he recounted the scene at Goodman Proctor's forge.

Mr. Mather and Judge Sewall listened very gravely to these tales and when my father had ended there was not so much as a word spoken for full two minutes.

“ My mind, if you will have it,” said Mr. Mather, at last, “ is that we leave these papers here, taking with us only this letter and the boy to tell what he saw, and to lay this single case with the happenings at Goodman Proctor's forge before the governor and to ask his privilege to deal with these black souls according to our judgments. For the blackness of this case makes it such an one to use for an example whereby to cut these evils short and

establish righteousness again. This is an evil case, in sooth, but not new, for as we know, witches have afflicted mankind in divers ways for many centuries, e'en since the days of the Witch of Endor, and they will over-run this goodly land belike unless we have an eye to their transgressions. No man knoweth the evils that are being hatched out among us; even now, devils with clanking chains are stalking about making a frightful din in the night. Maids here in Boston, even, are coming to feel the evil spell and have ceased their spinning. For, in truth, witchcraft, I have come to observe, cometh on like a malignant fever, showing out small symptoms at first—little vanities and flirtings and thinkings on worldly things; then staying from service and then, at last, going over to the evil tempter soul and body."

By this time they had all risen and were preparing to go. Mr. Mather carried the evil letter, and I followed them out of the door, shaking very much, I mind me, at

thinking that I would soon be face to face with His Majesty's royal governor. As we walked across the yard, I noticed Mistress Betty and my sister Mercy, seated under a large tree at the side of the house, and conversing with a youngish man who was very gorgeously bedecked with lace and trappings and was laughing with great heartiness, insomuch that my father turned about and asked Judge Sewall who the guest might be.

"Why, that," answered the Judge, who was ever mild-spoken, "is Sir Harrenden Orkney, who is here on some trading matters of his father's in London; a young man of fair enough repute, methinks, but much given to laughter and vanities. It beseemeth me he passes much of his time here of late."

I did not venture to give voice to my thoughts as we walked along, but verily I was glad that my dear sister could come to know such an one, and listen to such sprightly conversation. But I noted how

the Reverend Mr. Mather looked behind him and frowned darkly at the young man's frivolous apparel and demeanor, and I even heard him mutter that he liked not such cockahoop braggarts as yon, and he counselled Judge Sewall lest he allow Mistress Betty to spend much time in his company. "For," says he, "'tis a good lass, and thou knowest the old saying, which e'en holds true to-day, that the laughter of knaves is like the crackling of the branches under the kettle—a true token of the flames they are hasting to."

CHAPTER IV.

IN WHICH THE ROYAL GOVERNOR HAS A
GREAT LAUGH.

WHEN we had come to the Province House, there were people standing all about in little groups under the trees and on the large steps and there were chaise carts, and calashes and coaches about, and an air of much excitement. My father said that he had never seen the like of it before, and spoke to Mr. Mather, saying that when Sir Edmund Andros had come over to administer the colony, lines of soldiery guarded his house, and none of the good men were so much as permitted to go upon the grounds.

"And much better so, methinks," said Mr. Mather, in a very low voice, as we came up the walk. "For, in sad earnest,

this governor is no more than a seafaring man, an adventurer, withal."

"Long live King William of Orange and his gracious queen!" called a voice.

"God preserve our new charter!" cried another.

"And our new governor!" shouted still another.

"And our godly Mr. Mather!" called a fourth one, espying the famous minister coming up the walk. In truth, I tried not to notice his bow legs as he trudged along before me, nor to remember the jibe anent his having more learning than he could carry, but I heard a young runagate near me whisper to his companion that the reverend doctor should have a little cart to pull his wisdom in, and thereby relieve his limbs, which caused something of a laugh, until the tithing-man gave the causer of it a poke with his long staff which made him wince, I'll warrant you.

The servants, seeing that the Reverend Mr. Mather was of our party, allowed us

to go in without parleying, and one of them pointed to a door on the side of the wide hall, saying that we would find His Excellency within.

Sir William Phipps, His Majesty's new governor of the Province of Massachusetts Bay, was seated behind a big table with a huge pile of papers strewn in great confusion about him. He had a very perplexed look, as if, in truth, all these matters were beyond his ken, wherefore he had shrewdly given up the attempt to solve them, and was sitting back twirling one of the curls of his white wig, of which, methought, he was a little proud. He rose up in such suddenness at seeing us, that the chair he was sitting in toppled backwards, at which, seeing him laugh, I did so myself, but was stopped by a look from Judge Sewall.

"Now, I suppose you'd say that was caused by a witch!" said His Excellency, picking up the chair and giving me a side look.

"The devil is in truth among us," replied Mr. Mather, without so much as a smile, and then made he my father known to His Excellency.

"And this would be your boy?" asked the governor, looking at me.

"My son, Determined," answered my good father.

"And a loyal subject of His Majesty, I make no doubt," said the governor.

Then we all sate ourselves down, and seeing Mr. Mather unfold the paper he had brought, the governor said,

"If it is some weighty business ye'll be about, I'll e'en ask you to lay to while I make a clearing here." Whereat he fell to arranging his papers and putting them away, saying a pleasant word now and then as we all waited his pleasure. When he had finished, the Reverend Mr. Mather began in a very solemn tone.

"Your Excellency," says he, "Judge Corwin has brought us a grave mort of tidings from Salem town, for Satan in very

truth, as you will see, has taken up his abode among the good people there."

My mind misdoubts me that the royal governor must have been hearing over much concerning these matters sith his landing in the colony, for he looked a-wearied as he gazed from one to the other of us.

"What have ye there?" he asked of Mr. Mather, who lost no time in acquainting His Excellency with the story which had weighed so heavily on all of us. First, he had me tell of seeing those four dark objects in the woods; then he told of Master Calen's wife finding the strange missive in the clamshell. The little governor put out his hand for the missive itself, which Mr. Mather waved about while he discoursed, but the reverend minister did not hand it to him, and I could see that His Excellency was getting to be very curious about it. After the little governor had listened to the strange story of how the four black figures had forced Goodman

Proctor to forge the manacles, Mr. Mather handed him the cartel, saying,

“Now this is the most complete evidence against the foul fiend that we have come by, seeing how his own signature is verily affixed thereto. I know not of its full import for the evil plan of it is in vague terms, but this I would say to Your Excellency, in the name of our gracious sovereign and of the good God, that if you do not look into these evil transactions which the Prince of Sin and Blackness is hatching in the very midst of our fair colony, then will divine wrath be visited upon you. Our good town of Salem cries unto you as the king’s representative in this fair province to rid it of this witchcraft.”

Mr. Mather waxed very much excited as he spake in this wise and pounded the table with his fist right in front of the little governor’s nose in a manner that nobody but the celebrated divine would have had the boldness to do, and he waxed more energetic as he went on, to the great aston-

ishment of Sir William Phipps, who stared at him, twirling one of the curls of his wig and starting every time the Reverend Mr. Mather's godly fist came down on the table.

"There is no royal governor," says he, without waiting for His Excellency to speak; "there is no royal governor who knoweth as much concerning Satan and his ways as I do. For I am profoundly versed in the usage of the unholy art of witchcraft, and it is not a matter for worldly legislation and for governors to fathom or concern themselves with, but to listen to the learned ministers and act with compliance, leaving these mysteries and their meaning and purport to those who have thought and studied and pondered on these things."

"Forsooth, forsooth," said the little governor, smiling. "Wait but till I read what the devil hath to say for himself." And so saying, he laid the letter flat on the table and studied it carefully.

"These firebrands of Satan," said Mr. Mather, as the governor was studying the paper, "have been winning over our good people into their evil band in great numbers so that now a full hundred are afflicted."

"The devil, I am willing to tell Your Excellency," said Judge Sewall, in his solemn voice, "gaineth ground and converts by these secret arts each day, so that methinks his dominion will soon be established over us. I recommend in the name of our beloved province to appoint Mr. Mather as a commissioner to deal with these evils, seeing his great learning on invisible things and the dread that he is held in thereby, by the Prince of Darkness."

But the little governor was too much concerned with the strange letter to give answer, and we all waited. He had a wizened, brown, weather-beaten face, and a little smile seemed to be always playing about the ends of his lips, as if he would like to laugh but forbore to seeing how unpopular it was with us. Suddenly, he

placed a weight on the letter and leaned back in his great chair giving such a laugh as I had never heard before in my whole life. I opine that if the worthy Judge Sewall had laughed so, the shock of it would have certainly killed him, but as for me, I must e'en laugh a little too, for I could not keep it in when I saw how that the royal governor stamped on the floor and shook his hands and screwed up his face, and was well-nigh beside himself with merriment. My father gave me a very severe frown at my forgetting myself in such a way, but did not speak concerning it lest the royal governor might take it amiss, for in very truth, it was an honor to laugh with the friend of our dread sovereign. Mr. Mather and Judge Sewall looked very much displeased at such unholy and boisterous mirth at such a time, until finally the reverend minister, after keeping silence for full five minutes—which was an unusual thing for him to do as I later heard it remarked—pointed his finger

to the letter and almost touching the queer mark at the bottom, said, in a very cold voice.

“Is not this the devil’s signature, in very truth, which confronts us?”

“Good sooth, it is so,” says my governor, with a great laugh, “and the most rampant and abominable devil that ever afflicted a Christian settlement! Why, goodmen, ’tis no witchcraft ye have to fear—it’s pirates that are hatching their schemes in the very midst of ye!”

And then he fell to studying the letter again, while Mr. Mather and my father and the Boston judge stood there looking at each other very dumfounded, but none spake a word.

“Why, look ye here,” says His Excellency, laughing all the while, and running over the words of the letter with his big, brown finger. “This ‘Infernal Majesty’ is Low’s brig, and yon is Low’s signature, and marry, the only one he knows how to make. ‘*Maid in yesterday,*’ eh? That’ll

be the *Sea Maid*—my own ship that I came hither in! And forsooth, he's in the right way of it about the *Nymph* putting in later and her having the treasure aboard her, for she laid to in the last minute for some repairs, but how he came by this knowledge, the shrewd varlet, hath verily a certain smack of witchery in it, and that's a truth! Now, this matter about the irons, I do not well make out. '*Get irons by the Saturday and make place—come Saturday night. Keep caldron close.*' He's playing his wits against ye there. '*Rough overhauling.*' He knows me, I'll warrant, does this runagate Low, and he says rough overhauling! Mayhap he'll think I'm on the *Nymph*. Of a truth, it'll be the roughest overhauling *he* ever made. Ye mind the treasure I raised in the West Indies from the Spanish galleon?"

He looked at Judge Sewall as he said this, and the Judge answered in his solemn voice,

“Methinks I have heard somewhat of Your Excellency’s brave exploit.”

But my father and the Reverend Mr. Mather spake never a word and my father looked mightily ashamed, methought. Finally, Mr. Mather began to strut about the room and seemed to be keeping in his anger which gave a mort of pleasure to our new governor, for he smiled to see it, and shifted his eye sideways in my direction.

But anon, Mr. Mather stopped short and says he,

“Doth Your Excellency—a God-fearing man, I make no doubt—say that there are no witches afflicting us? Are we to invite God’s vengeance upon us by giving no concern to these lost souls who ply their wicked trade in darkness, confounding us with their mysteries, but let them usurp his kingdom? I have the testimony of many who have smelled brimstone about in the air at even. I have pondered over many books and learned treatises on this

abominable trade and I know the means whereby to confound them and drive them into their infernal home."

"Body o' me!" quoth the little governor, leaning back in his big chair, and smiling very wide. "Methinks Mr. Mather and Satan are old friends."

Now the Reverend Mr. Mather waxed exceeding wroth at this for of a truth, his reputation for godliness was not disputed by any, and he winced under the jibe—the more so, as I thought, sith even my father could not refrain from smiling a little. The reverend minister was of the hue of a ripe cherry, and he answered the governor in a very wrathful spirit, or as much so as he dared, seeing His Excellency's recent coming among us and his high position.

"These be matters treating of the supernatural," said the reverend parson. "Their gravity is such that it behooves us to follow the ancient means of punishing the offenders; we must punish first those who are

first caught, and afterwards go after them who have been the tempters. We must hang this Calen and his wife, of whom we spake but now, before they can become further influenced."

"Gramercy!" cried His Excellency. "What? Kill those who have made these things known to us?"

"We must break the chain of evil at the link which comes nearest to us, though its beginning be far away," replied the minister. "If in truth there be a pirate on the end of the chain instead of a witch, 'twill relieve us mightily, but meanwhile, we must make this sacrifice for the salvation of our good town of Salem. There be a mort of other cases with which we did not think it best to trouble Your Excellency sith you are much engaged with civil business and unread in these invisible evils."

The governor listened to all this as if he were hugely amazed at it, which only seemed to make Mr. Mather the more wroth.

"Look ye now," says His Excellency. "You who are learned in these mysteries which sit so nigh thy heart can solve them and settle them and save the goodly town of Salem from the devil, an' you will, for I make no doubts at all he will be frightened away at the learning thou'lt hurl upon him and scamper away as fast as his Satanic legs can carry him. And albeit I'm no more than a plain man myself and unlearned in holy writ, though with a mort of reverence for the commandment, 'Thou shalt not steal.' I'll have after this marplot, Edward Low, and his crew of cutthroats, in the name of His Majesty, King William of Orange, and the freedom of the high seas. And I'll warrant you, if I have such fair fortune as to find him at the end of Mr. Mather's chain, I'll even tie that same chain around his neck and hang him with it, and what time his royal highness, the devil, gets back to his home, being chased there by the godly Mr. Mather, he'll find the hardest villain and murderer that ever

overhauled a Christian vessel waitin' for him. And I'll eke take this boy here along o' me to keep him safe from the witches withal."

CHAPTER V.

IN WHICH I HAVE AN ADVENTURE.

I WILL not weary your ears by recounting the converse that I had with my father, nor how he made a many objections to this journeying forth with the new governor. It needs but to tell you that he gave over at the last, saying I might go, and this I make no doubts, because it was of much import to him at that time to be in good repute with the king's representative ; moreover he deemed it would be best for me to be away and clear of these witchcrafts, seeing the danger that lurked near every one. And of a truth, though he did not relax a whit in his belief in these evils, he came to think after pondering somewhat that in this case His Excellency was right, the more so because we had been annoyed over-

much by sea robbers of late, who came from the West Indies and plundered our incoming vessels. But Mr. Mather and Judge Sewall were of a very different mind to my father, being so bestead of witchcraft that they could see naught else. And I heard the famous minister say at Judge Sewall's house the very next day that he would have after the Salem witches without any parleying.

"For," says he, "pirates, if such there be in this case, which I doubt me gravely, have only temporal powers, but those who sell themselves to Satan have a cunning in plying their wickedness which comes from supernatural means, confounding 'war bravery,' of which, methinks, we have overmuch in the Government House."

As for me, I spent but that one day at the Judge's house, for His Excellency made demand that I should bring my portmantau and stay at the Government House while he should certify himself concerning his plans. My father went down to Salem

at nightfall, bidding me a fair good-bye and conjuring me to pray constantly that ill might not befall me. My sister Mercy was of a very grave countenance when I told her what I was going to do, saying that she much feared I would lose my life at it, but it was no time for parleying.

"Now," says His Excellency, the next morning, when I was seated in one of his high-backed, carved chairs, and feeling very grand at my importance, "we'll after these cutthroats before we begin any administering, and we'll let worshipful Master Stoughton take care of the colony—witches and devils and taxes and what not—with the help of Mr. Mather and Judge Sewall."

Now I knew that Mr. Stoughton, who had been the acting governor until His Excellency arrived, was of a mild temper, and I feared that Mr. Mather, who was over-brazen in his demeanor, would lord it over him and have the affairs of the colony administered very much after his liking, but being only a stripling, I said nothing

at all on it, but ventured to ask the governor when we should go.

"Marry, now, that's the question!" says he, opening the strange letter and reading it over very slowly. "There be some things here that I comprehend, and others that be great mysteries, as Mr. Mather would call them.

"*'Infernal Majesty here.'* That means that Low's ship is somewhere near Salem coast, belike at Marblehead, it being a favored place with such like, and a very handy run from Boston where he'd ne'er have the brazenness to moor his bark. There may be more than one ship, too; this rascal, Low, is a sea-king, and he hath a many sloops and agents at his bidding. He made after me off Tortuga when I raised the treasure, and the marplot had a squadron under him. '*Maid in yesterday but did not trouble.*' Now the meaning o' that's as sure as the king's taxes, for he, being convinced on't she brought no treasure, didn't overhaul us, for that would bring the

lurking devil to notice. That's like Low—he's a considerate man withal and shrewd, I'll warrant you, and he hath a mighty pretty fashion with his cutlass.

"Now he says '*Other later,*' and that's a truth and she'll be later than he thinks if he's expecting to do this little matter of overhauling close after the Saturday—she'll not put in for a month or thereabout. But he's right on the treasure—she has it—five hundred thousand pounds—silver, plate and the like—and naught but two guns to protect herself and a load of serving people and indentured help!

"And here is the part that hath the smell of witchcraft in it, and this is the coil we must straighten out. '*Get irons by Saturday and make place. Come on Saturday night—rough overhauling.*'"

His Excellency sat back in his chair and twirled his thumbs and fell into a deep pondering.

"Now, this is what *I* make it out to be," says he, looking at me, very wise. "Some

of these wretches on the land are making ready a place to hide my treasure when they get it—yourself beheld them on that night you told us of. It was those same four that turned Goodman Proctor's hair white with their witching jibes and got the manacles that their master, Low, ordered. I'll warrant they cared enough for their hides to make sure of having those ready when he should order them, so they set their wits to working and a shrewd game it was."

The governor fell to pondering again, and two of his big, brown fingers were pushed into the inside corners of his eyes which held them close shut, and his face was drawn into a look of deep thought. Finally, he looked at me and kept his eyes steadily upon me so that they seemed to look clean through to the back of my headpiece, the while he seemed still to be thinking on other things. Then he said,

"'Tis a stout lad I take thee to be ; dost

care to go on a little embassy for His Majesty, King William of Orange ? ”

He waited for my answering for only a minute.

“ In truth, sir,” says I, “ my mind misdoubts me that I have enough of shrewdness in me to take a weighty matter on myself for the solving, but I am not of a mind to gainsay it lest Your Excellency set me down to be lacking in bravery, when in truth, I have no fear about it, only doubts.”

“ Aye,” says my governor, “ no one of us has any fear concerning it—only doubts, as thou sayest—and good sooth, we must settle those same doubts before we settle our pirates, that’s a truth !

“ Now, if these matters of witchcraft sit too nigh thy heart, you are not of a temper to do this embassy, for it is to go back into your own bewitched neighborhood, and I fear me they will turn your thoughts about so that ye’ll be pursuing the devil instead of doing my bidding.”

"Nay, sir," says I. "I will do Your Excellency's bidding with as much of shrewdness as I have, leaving the witches to Mr. Mather to fight with books and learning."

"Gramercy !" cried Sir William Phipps. "'Tis a notable lad and thou'lt come by much credit. Now, lark ye ! One week from now, it being now Friday, will be the reception to me and Lady Phipps here in the Government House, and until that day there'll be a mort of matters touching His Majesty's pleasure which he has laid to my consideration. At the nearest figuring on it, I doubt the *Nymph* may put in two weeks after or in a way of speaking, three weeks or a month belike from this time now, and she's safe 'till she comes inside the arms of Massachusetts Bay. But before that, I would fain know somewhat about these cutthroats that are lurking hereabouts, in the matter of their numbers and equipment for fighting. For if they're to have after us with a squadron, as I've known them do, I must be certified to it. Now,

you're to go down to Marblehead and prowl about and go among the seafaring folk, and keep thine eyes open and thy tongue silent, and find out if any of their boats be at the moorings and how many there be and how many of these murderous varlets has Low brought up from the Indies to carry off this emprise, and I would have you play the unmindful boy whom nobody heeds so as thereby to confound any suspicions about thee that might arise. Dost make me a comfortable answer to that, Determined?"

I think that this was verily the first time that any had called me by my name since I came to Boston town, for young boys were not a matter of much concern among such worthies as Judge Sewall and Mr. Mather, and it gave me a good heart to hear it. Moreover, His Excellency had a way with him that took my fancy, albeit, he was an unlearned man and not in any wise versed in invisible things.

I'll not weary you with all the instruc-

tions that he gave me, and in truth, they were not many. He wanted to know all that I could learn about these rascals, and scarce had the sun gone down when I was seated very comfortable on the Salem coach, sitting well into a dark corner and listening to the discourse of the other passengers. One man was telling how old Goodman Corey's wife was arrested on a charge of witchcraft because her cat had taken a fit, and how Goodman Corey himself was brought on a similar charge and refused to answer the magistrates' questions, upbraiding them with their ignorance and superstition. "Good sooth," says one man, "they will press him to death for contempt of court if he persists in his stubbornness."

And it came to pass that they did this dreadful thing which is ever a blot on our good fame, for when Goodman Corey was brought to trial and refused to answer the questions, they laid him down and placed heavy weights upon his body until his life was crushed out.

"Methinks," said another man, sitting nigh to me, "that when the sheriffs went for Rebecca Nurse it would have behooved them to take all the family of grandchildren as well instead of leaving those little brands of Satan to grow into witches after the fashion of the old hag!"

Now, I knew Rebecca Nurse and I knew her to be as virtuous and godly a woman as ever lived in our neighborhood, and I was seized with much sorrow for her for she was eighty-three years old.

"How did they make discovery of her evil trade?" asked one.

"By her carrying a stick with her to church to confound the influence of the preaching."

Now I knew right well that Rebecca Nurse carried this same stick because of a certain lameness which troubled her, but I dared make no comment lest I be drawn into the discourse and some ask me who I might be.

When we were just outside of Salem vil-

lage, I slid down from the coach and was away in the darkness before any of the passengers knew what I was about, and pushed my way over the fields, till I came to the Marblehead Road, which led out to Marblehead Neck where I had been a many times to see the vessels moored there. After walking well-nigh an hour, as I could judge by the light of the moon, I saw the lights of the town shining and quickened my pace so that I might get into the village before many should be about, the fisher folk being early risers, and it was already well toward four o'clock, seeing how we had tarried several hours in Lynn where the horses were changed. For I knew that if any should see me come marching into the village it would make some comment and cause evil suspicions and misgivings among the people lest I be a spark blown from the infernal regions into their midst. I can very well recall how the air smacked of fish as I came near to the town, for, in very truth, every man

was a fisherman in Marblehead, which was also much famed for its many widows, seeing how many had lost their husbands who had been drowned at sea.

Now, as I came into the crooked street, I saw a little group of men standing together by the roadside, one being a tithing-man as I knew from his long staff, and I supposed they were stationed there to stop any witches who might come along this way from Salem. I wondered as I came near unto them how they had any tithing-men at all in that place, seeing the ungodly repute of the Marblehead people, they being mostly a pack of sea-going varlets living much in unlawfulness, with gambings and carousings. But I had not much time to think on these things, for as soon as they laid eyes upon me coming along the road, one called,

“Who goes there?”

Now this question came on me so sudden that I had no answer ready, for I could not tell them I was on the governor's business,

seeing that would give me a fame among them that would prevent my doing his wishes in the right way. So I stood staring at them stupidly as they gathered about me in the dark. The road ran along the edge of a brook which at that place was quite wide.

"Hark ye," says the tithing-man. "Wherefore comest thou at this hour and by such a route?"

"I am a Salem lad," says I, "and expect to go a-fishing"—which was a truth, seeing how I did expect to go a-fishing in some future time when events should be more favorable to it. Then the tithing-man laid down his staff and began to pinch me gently with both his hands, at which I winced and called, "Ouch!" for well I knew his design in thus pinching me, for witches were reputed not to feel such pinchings and this manner of espying them out was very common.

But the tithing-man seemed not to be assured even after this trial, and he en-



"HATH THE DEVIL EVER APPEARED TO THEE?" HE ASKED.

gaged in some low discourse with one or two of his companions, while the others held me.

"Hath the devil ever appeared to thee?" he asked, after a little.

"Of a truth, sir, he never has," says I.

"Natheless, methinks the marplot hath an evil air, and his coming is peculiar," said the tithing-man. "What is thy name, boy?"

"Now, that is no concern of thine," says I, hotly, being resolved not to tell my name, and not liking to be laid in more lies than need be on account of my godly training by my father. "I am a godly lad with no evil purpose, and I am a subject of the king and have the rights of a law-abiding freeman. Wherefore do you detain me?"

"Body o' me!" says the tithing-man, giving me a sound shaking, so that my teeth rattled together. "I'll teach thee how to use thy voice with the officials of the church." And with that, he turned to the others in high anger.

"See'st thou how his evil temper showeth itself in his answerings? Methinks, without any doubt he is one of those rampant hirelings of the devil, for such often show their trade by having no meekness in the face of authority. Now, therefore, will we take him over to Salem before Magistrate Corwin to have his character inquired into."

At this, I was like to drop down on the ground with fear lest he carry out this threat, for my father was not to know of this secret embassy, and verily if I were taken to him it would confound all our plans, and I had, moreover, a misgiving that if he saw me in my home again he would keep me there, in spite of the new governor. The tithing-man started along the road, pulling me along with him, when one of the others called after him, saying,

"Master Winslow, an' it please you, I think the worshipful Master Corwin is in Boston town seeing the new governor, for I was in Salem but two days since and heard it."

Now did I know a great feeling of relief, and my heart went down to where it belonged in my breast, for Master Winslow stopped short and said,

“Mayhap ’twere better, then, to try the water test and settle it here and now.”

Now, this water test was to throw me into the water, as you will remember that Mr. Mather spoke of, and if I should sink and then come up it would be an evidence that I was not a witch, but if I should float on the surface then indeed would I be known as a minion of Satan. So, having discoursed about this matter among themselves, they all picked me up, to which I made no resistance, the reason for which you will soon see. And carrying me down to the bank, they all stood holding me fast while the tithing-man said, in a very solemn, gloomy voice,

“If thou sink, thy case be well,
But floating, thou’rt a brand of Hell.”

And at this, I went tumbling into the water with a smart splash. Now I do not know whether I sank or not in their meaning of it, but this I do know, that in a second I was kicking my legs furiously and swimming with all of my might toward the other shore.

"Body o' me!" I heard the tithing-man calling behind me.

"Gramercy, there's a shrewd trick, I'll warrant," says another, but I did not give much heed to their callings, only clomb up as fast as I could out of the water on the other shore and turned about and looked them full in the face.

"Thou heathenish scapegrace!" yelled the tithing-man, waving his staff. "Let be thy hellish tricks! I summon thee in the name of the law to return hither, else thou'lt come by a sound trouncing for thy pranks."

"Forsooth," quoth I, "thou'lt have to catch me first, and that by wetting thy official garb in this good water," and I gave

a stout laugh, which distempered him the more, but I, seeing that one of the party looked as though he might be making ready to swim across the water, wasted no more time in parleying, but hastened up through the woods into a lonely place very thick with trees, where, it now being fair morning and the sun coming up, I took off my clothes and hung them about to dry, sitting on a stone the while, and bethinking me of how I should go about finding out if Sir Edward Low and his band of pirates were about Marblehead Neck. As for the trouncing that Master Winslow had promised me, I had little fear of it, seeing how it was almost dark when they saw me, but I resolved to turn my doublet wrong side about by way of a disguise, the inside of it being of a different shade, though of a truth much of the color of my precious doublet, on *both* sides, had been left in the water so that there was a magical change in its color, which, in very truth, had the smack of witchcraft and evil conjurings about it, according to Mr. Mather's way of thinking.

CHAPTER VI.

IN WHICH I PRETEND TO BE A FAMOUS .
PERSONAGE.

“Now,” thought I, as I made my way down toward the shore, where there were many sloops and larger craft anchored, “if I come by any adventures here ’twill not be of this last sort, I’ll warrant.” For in truth, I doubt me if a tithing-man had ever set foot in those parts, they being filled with a kind of people who seemed a mort like foreigners,—great, burly, curly-headed, brown-faced marplots, and wenches with big, red arms, and muscles in them like to those of men. And there was the smack of fish in the very air.

“Look you here,” says I, to a lumbering seaman whom I came upon. “Can you point me any vessels from the Spanish Indies?”

He looked me all over and then he shook his head and answered me, sounding and rolling all his r's in such fashion that I could not make it out. So I betook me down to the water's edge, and spent that whole day until evening prowling about among the fishermen, but never a one did I see that looked like a pirate, knowing those sea robbers to be always very gaily attired, wearing many colors, and carrying themselves with a bold air. I asked as many questions as I dared, going onto the ships and looking about them, for a mort of the Marbleheaders were of a pleasant temper withal, and not much given to questioning, themselves. But the day passed, and not a thing had I come upon which would be of any service to His Excellency, and I began to think that we were in a blunder, supposing the pirates to be in these parts. Now, I was just pondering as to where I should sleep that night, and hoping that some thought would come to me as to how to go about my work

on the morrow, when I bethought me how it was now the Saturday even, and I remembered how the strange missive had said, "*Come Saturday night—rough overhauling.*" "Now, truly, there will be no overhauling this night," says I to myself, "but mayhap they think there will be and will 'come'," though where from or where to was the knot I could not untie. "If they come from somewhere in the Salem woods and down to the shore to the spot near where they——" but then I paused in my pondering, for I recollected how they had never received the note. But then I bethought me that it was now some days sith the note was writ, and that mayhap there would have been some other note mentioning Saturday night, since that one; and that in very truth the party on board the ship might not know how that their brothers had not received the missive, and so would be on hand themselves at the least of it. This was not a likely thing, but bethinking me that the party on the

land might in some secret manner know that they were to be taken on board on Saturday night, they might so come down to the shore for that purpose. Now it was nigh to nine o'clock at night when I had seen the four dark figures going through the woods, and I supposed that this would be about the time of their coming if they came at all this night. I had but two hours or thereabouts wherein to make my way to Salem. But a plan came to my mind that filled my heart with goodly hopes.

Going straightway into the woods, I picked up a pine cone from the dried leaves, for there were many of them there as I had noticed when I was drying my clothes that morning, and filling it with the resin from the trees thereabout, I wrapped it in a big leaf and thrust it into my doublet.

Making my way from Marblehead as fast as my two legs could carry me, and keeping an eye out for such like troublesome varlets as Master Winslow, who

might stop me in my hastening, I hurried on and soon I got well clear of the fishing village and found myself on the open way towards Salem town. Not once did I pause, but hurried along, and now running, now walking, but always as swift as might be, until at last, I came upon a sight of the houses that were so familiar to my eye.

Now you will not wonder that I dared to stalk down through the streets of Salem town at eight o'clock at night in such a brazen fashion, knowing right well as ye do how youths and maidens go strutting about in these days as late as ten o'clock, paying no more heed to the curfew than if it were a cow's bell, but I'll promise you that if any of you had been caught about in that time at eight o'clock o' the night, you would have come by as sound a thrashing in the market-place as ever was laid on a law-breaking urchin, and a fair law it was, seeing the rampant and disloyal meetings that these Sons of Liberty are holding in our good town now, denouncing the king

till midnight. But I am an old-fashioned man, they say, and not much as a statesman, nor of a thought with Mr. Franklin, whom, natheless, I do admire mightily for his shrewdness.

Now, as I came down through the street not a soul was about, and this was especially the case on account of the witchcrafts, seeing that a proclamation had gone forth ordering it so. As I came along I passed by a tithing-man stumping up and down, but gave such a run past him that he could only turn and stare at me, calling,

“Thou’st better in thy bed with godly, law-abiding citizens! Get thee hence, and let me not see thee this late again, coming home from playing shuttle-board, for that I’ll warrant thou’st been doing!” And he stumped along again with a very important demeanor like most of them that were tithing-men.

When I came to the prison lane, I turned into it and made my way straightway for the jail. I had come, in truth, to do a sin-

ful thing the better to accomplish a good one, and must needs resort to a trick to keep my business and my identity a secret. For it was necessary for me to know where the clam-shell had been found, so that I might seek out that place to wait in. So I clomb up over the doorway with much danger of breaking my head at it, and I crept along the narrow ledge outside the row of windows. Now when I came to the first window, it being dark, I stopped before it and called out in a very deep, slow voice,

“ Goodman Calen, answer ! ”

“ In sooth, I am not Goodman Calen,” said a trembling voice, and so I went on to the next window, asking the same question in the same way, but each prisoner answered that he was not Master Calen, until finally on asking it at the fifth window, a shaking voice answered,

“ I am he ; wherefore am I called ? ”

“ Goodman Calen,” said I, in a voice as solemn and low as I could make it, “ I am

in very truth thy master, the devil, and I am come to conjure thee to speak me the truth in the matter I shall ask thee concerning."

There was no answer to this but the clanking of a chain, and the creaking of a door within, and then a voice saying,

"Goodman Calen, with whom dost thou converse in this wise? Answer, for if thou dost not, I, as thy jailor, will make report of it to the magistrates that thou'rt conniving with thy friends to make thy escape." And scarce was this said when I heard the great door underneath me, over which I had crept along the ledge, swing open, and beheld a tall figure with a sugar loaf hat step out into the darkness and reach a long tithing-staff at me, giving me a smart poke.

"Have out of that!" says he, still poking at me with the staff. "Come down and surrender thyself as an accomplice of this prisoner to whom thou talkest."

Now he could not see me well in the

dark, and I crouched into the window ledge, huddling myself together as small as I might, and at the same time bringing forth the dry cone with the resin from my doublet.

"Say'st thou so?" quoth I. "Then will I show thee that in very truth I am thy master, the devil, and I will have no parley with such as thou!" And so saying, I lit the cone, holding it till it blazed mightily and crackled and then I hurled it straight at the head of the prison keeper, who fell down on his knees, crying,

"Destroy me not with thy brimstone!" And then, rising, he scampered into the jail without a word more to me. And now was there great commotion within, some telling others, as I heard, how the devil was laying siege to the prison and was making ready to storm it with brimstone if the keepers would not surrender their souls and their prisoners to him. In the midst of it, I called out,

"Goodman Calen, answer me this, with

thy word for its truth. Where did'st thou find the letter written by me and placed in the clam-shell?"

"On the shore near Deacon Bishop's house, under a goodly rock over which spreads a willow tree."

"Sooth, that is enough!" cried I, for there was no time to lose, and jumping down from the ledge, I hastened from the place which was now coming to be full of lights and excited shouts, and made my way straightway to the shore, it being already past nine o'clock, as I made out from the bell tolling on Mr. Dillingham's church.

CHAPTER VII

IN WHICH I HEAR SOMETHING OF INTEREST.

It was now not many minutes before I found myself trudging along the sandy shore that stretched far beyond where Deacon Bishop's house stood and all the sound I had to keep me company was the splashing of the waters that beat up against the rocks. Soon I could see dimly the great spreading willow tree a little way in from the shore, and beneath it a goodly stone, and it being the only willow tree of any size about, I knew it to be the one where Goodman Calen had found the missive. It was very quiet as I came under the tree, there being no sign of any life at all, and my mind began to misdoubt me sorely that any meeting would be held here, for I think I must have expected some signs of it on arriving at the spot, so

strong was my wish to learn about these rascals and win the applause of His Excellency.

I sate me down on the rock and looked about me wondering where I should conceal myself if indeed they should come, knowing they would use the willow tree and the rock for their own purposes, and there being no others near to it but very slender ones, which I doubted would not conceal me from their sight. For although the place was a well chosen one for secrecy, it being hid on the hither side by a little bluff which rose up sheer from behind the rock, and on the other by big boulders and such like, the little space nigh to the rock was clear and offered no hiding place where one might be sure of hearing anything that was spoke by them who should be gathered there. However, I resolved to make the best of such an open hiding place, if belike I was forced to seek one, which I was in much doubt about. In one manner good fortune favored me, for it was

without doubt the darkest night that I had ever known. So I betook me to one of the stoutest of the slender trees, taking care to choose one in such a way to the wind that what little breeze there was should blow in my direction, and so bring me any sounds from the big willow, and I sate myself down on the furtherest side of it, somewhat hidden in the high growth about it. You may be very certain that at every sound I was startled overmuch, and the wind blowing through the top of the great tree and the swishing of the water made me to shudder somewhat, for there was no gainsaying the loneliness of the place. And moreover, the shrieking of the wild sea-birds made the spot to seem in truth like some favorite meeting-place of witches and demons, and I felt this the more strongly because I could not see the birds for the blackness of the night and my imaginings kept playing strange pranks as to the cause of the screechings. After I had sat there for a long time that seemed

to me verily as if it were the whole night, I heard a bell afar off sounding faintly, and I knew it to be that on Mr. Dillingham's church, and I was somewhat cheered at the thought of there being some godliness and token of holy things in my hearing.

After as much as an hour more, I heard a splashing of a different sort from the swishing of the water against the rock, for this was regular and seemed to be coming nearer and nearer, so that I pricked up my ears. I had thought that if I should be so favored as to hear any signs of approaching at all, 'twould be from the land, for the four dark figures marching down to the water's edge seemed to be most in my mind, but here in truth, if I mistook not the sound of it, was a boat approaching the shore, though I could see nothing for the darkness that lay over the bay. But in good time, I made out a little shallop coming toward the land with three figures in it. I could hear them discoursing and now and then an oath, but could make out

nothing of what they said. Soon they reached the shore, and stepping out in the water, they pulled the little boat up to a secure place under the lee of a big rock, where one journeying along the shore would scarce notice it e'en though the night be not so black, and then they marched cautiously up toward the willow tree.

I could not see them plain enough to make out how they were attired except that as they came nearer I noticed how two of them wore but caps and loose, open shirts whereby their chests were plain to view. And each of these two bore over his arm what seemed to be a long cloak, doubtless that he might the better hide himself from curious folk should the need arise on a sudden. And these two fellows walked with a swaggering air as how they should be great fellows and of much courage, one of them carrying a cutlass and wearing such a fierce-looking black beard as I had never set my two eyes on before. But the other fellow of the three seemed

to be a man of mild demeanor who followed after these two other rascals with a modest carriage and as they passed near to me, I could see how that he was trapped out in a different way, more after the fashion of a landsman.

"Methought the over-fed varlets would not make shift to come," says the big fellow with the cutlass and the black beard, looking about him when they reached the willow tree. And then he stooped and looked under the rock.

"Nay, there's naught there. How say you, shall make an end on't hereabouts or go on?"

He said this last in a low tone to the one behind him who made some answer that I could not hear.

"Thou knowest the time of the *Nymph's* sailing?" quoth the second fellow to the one behind him.

"Good sooth," says the milder looking man, who, I could now see, by a rift in the black sky, was decked somewhat after the

fashion of a servant. "Sir William made his figuring on her putting in about a month or thereabouts after his own landing. I know not just the time of her sailing, for it waits on the matter of her repairs. Be-like she will put in in about three weeks, the winds being favorable."

"What did Low promise ye, mate?" called back the fierce-looking fellow, who led the way, and at the same moment he stepped back a pace beside the fellow he spoke to.

"An equal share with his men and the right to leave them if I was of such a mind, after the overhauling," answered the other.

They were now well past the tree and making their way across the marshy land beyond it, the three of them almost abreast. For a minute, I knew not what to do in such case for I could not bring myself to let the chance slip me, nor yet could I venture out after them without their seeing it, but I was waxing so curious to know something of them now that my very eyes were

set on some of their party, that I made bold to come out from my hiding place and follow after them, putting my hopes for safety in the blackness of the night. The big fellow had a thundering voice and seemed not to care though all the world should hear it, and him only could I hear talking and belching forth oaths such as I'll warrant would have turned my good father white to hear—though I doubted His Excellency might have stood it without so much as wincing. So we passed beyond the marsh, myself keeping at a safe distance and into the thick woods that stretched to the west towards Danvers town. I took great care to step at just the same time as these fellows so that the sound of it might mingle with their sturdy footfalls, and never be heard by them. Now we went along in this fashion for some fifteen minutes, as I could judge, when of a sudden I stopped short, trembling with horror at the sight which I beheld before me in the thick night. For the great hulk-

ing fellow of a sudden fell behind the other two and in another minute I could see the glittering steel of his cutlass which he had unsheathed. Then in a minute more did the other loose-hung fellow step somewhat away from the quiet one's side and the black-bearded fellow from behind brought his cutlass around sideways with terrific force. Standing stark still with terror at this dreadful thing, I heard a little gurgling sound and then a crackling of the bushes and in another instant a reeling, headless object fell with a thud and lay quivering in the dark path.

"Let be, let be!" says the murderer, as the other one stooped down. "Dost think Low would send him hither stuffed with gold to be cut down and overhauled? Sooth, he's nothing by him but his serving papers! A weak-spirited fellow withal, with no stomach for overhauling a vessel!"

He was wiping his cutlass on the dead man's clothing as he said this, and when he had quite finished cleaning it thereon,

they made their way along again through the woods.

"Belike he was no fighting man," says the smaller man, "or Low would not send him to this mishap seeing the few there be of us for this emprise. We'll e'en have to make shift to play the cat instead of the lion in this case, but Low's wit'll take the place of the sloop if belike she comes not in good time."

"Aye, lad, and the fewer there be, the more gold for each when we once get at the treasure."

Not another word did they have to say about the poor fellow they had killed, but I made it out that he was a servant come over with the governor and had brake his service contract to scamper off, as a many of such did, and had fallen in with these rogues, giving them information till they had emptied his brain of all the little he knew, and then made away with him in this manner as being one less to share in the treasure.

I knew now what I had to expect at the hands of these fellows if belike they should lay hold on me, seeing how there was no honor or truth among them, as one sometimes may see even among ungodly people. But the little taste of information I had whetted my appetite for they had spoken of being few in number, of expecting a sloop, and of how Low's wit must e'en carry the thing if they should find themselves hard put to it. And I fancied from the big fellow's manner of saying how they must play the cat instead of the lion that they would make shift to play some shrewd trick to confound the governor's people.

So I followed them on, only stooping over the poor, lifeless body of the wretched fellow who had come by his death in his misdemeanors, and feeling about his clothing, I discovered a paper folded small which I tucked in my doublet, supposing it to be his indenture contract of service with His Excellency.

I kept well behind these murderous var-

lets and so we pressed on through the deep, dark forest till it seemed near an hour, when of a sudden the two stopped, and one jumping, caught a limb of a great tree and raising himself by his hands went hand over hand out on the branch, keeping his feet well clear of the ground, and let himself down on a flat stone beside a large rock which stood to one side of a mound all covered with vines and brush. When the other fellow had done this same thing, my dull mind began to see the cause of it; for they were, I doubted not, at the mouth of a cave which lay behind the rock, and were cautious not to have any path or footprints leading to it. And verily, that was the way of it, for when they were both upon the flat stone, the fellow whom I will call Blackbeard, called out in his hard, iron voice,

“Ho, one down and three across!”

And in another minute the rock was pushed out from within so as to show a space inside where two or three men had

been sitting. The two new-comers stooped down so as to pass within and disappeared, still leaving the entrance open for the reason, as I thought, that they did not mean to tarry long.

Now, at last, had I come by the hiding-place of these rascals and e'en come to know the signal by which one might enter here, for I could see how no manner of human strength—unless indeed it were that of Samson, in Holy Writ—could so much as jar the rock from without, seeing how there was no manner of laying hold on't, but must be pushed by several from within.

And now, waxing courageous with the chance before me of learning their secrets, did I creep stealthily to the mouth of the cave, and lying there as nigh to the opening as I dared, I could plainly hear old Blackbeard say,

“ Well, an' why came ye not to the rendezvous, as ye were ordered ? ”

And then the voice of one of the men inside, angrily,

"Ordered ! 'Od's death, we gat no orders ! Here have we laid to eight long days and nights for orders, and never a word or sign from Low ! Did ye bring us the rum he promised us ? By the blood of my father, does he mean to keep us anchored here while he takes yon gold and silver and bestows it to suit himself ?"

"What, varlet ! Gat ye not the words hid in the clamshell ?" cried the voice of old Blackbeard.

"Nay. Night after night have we overhauled the rock, but never a sign was there, and I'll make so bold as ask what's toward, for 'tis irkish business, as he'll know, stuck on a reef with scarce so much as a gallon of rum to cheer a gentleman."

"Then, of a truth, has it fallen in other hands, and here's a coil fit for the devil himself to unwind ! Why, man, ye were writ to get the manacles ready and come to the place o' Saturday night ready to go aboard."

"There be the manacles, then, and a

merry trick we had to get them," said the other man, with a short laugh, thinking, I doubt me not, of poor Goodman Proctor. "And right glad will I be for one to go on board the old tub as soon as may be, and have done with this foul den."

"Nay, then, there's no such need for speed," quoth Blackbeard, "sith the second ship, it seemeth—the one that hath the treasure—will not be along for a matter o' three weeks yet, and sooth, there's work for ye to do here, for the sloop cometh not and I doubt we must e'en make shift to overhaul the *Nymph*, when she does come, with what few men and arms Low can muster now on the one brig. Now, these be the chief's orders, and see that ye heed, thou dogs, or 'twill be the worse for thee when once Low gets his claws upon ye.

"Sith, as ye know, we have but eleven men to man yon ship, and eke but three old guns to her hulk, Low orders that ye make ready five and twenty stout logs from the forest here of such height and size as shall

seem to the lubbers aboard the *Nymph* like goodly guns, and these ye shall paint black, and when once aboard the brig, we'll e'en bestow them about with our three trusty guns among them, and trust to pirates' luck and Low's wit to carry the adventure through."

"Body o' the devil!" cried the other voice, when lo, a branch beneath me crackled and broke, and at the same instant did I hear a dreadful oath, and a sudden starting within the cave.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN WHICH I SPEND AN UNGODLY SABBATH.

As I stood there shaking, the black-bearded fellow made toward the door of the cave. I slunk backward, but e'en as I did so another branch rattled under me, making a sharp report in the still night, and at once the fellow leaped out and demanded, not loud but yet clear enough.

“Who's there?”

I flattened myself to the ground as much as might be and lay quiet, for I could think of naught else to do, and the pirates came flocking cautiously out of the cave to see what the danger might be. And then did I wish mightily for a little space that I had never come upon this dangerous emprise, but were safe in my father's house in Salem. And then did I bethink me sorely of my dear sister Mercy, and of her bitter grief if

her ne'er-do-weel brother returned not to her. For, as you will have discovered by this time, 'twas ever my gentle sister who had the strongest hold upon my heart, and she it was who did keep me from a many of those evil pranks of mine which, as I had been so often told, were a sad blot upon my good father's godliness. Yet ever did I think too of our good governor, whom I had begun to love mightily, and I was sore bestead to know how I was to send the news of the pirates' whereabouts and their plans to him, for I made no doubt that I should shortly be captured by these men and that they would speedily make an end of me. For all the while these thoughts were pounding in my head the rascals were feeling around in the dark—not daring to light more than their one small lantern, I suppose, lest they should bewray themselves and their abode to whomsoever might be lurking thereabouts. And I knew full well that if I should essay to run, the breaking of the boughs would

most surely point me out to them, and eke if I lay still where I was it was but a question of a few minutes when they would find me. And yet I know not how it was, but as I waited the fellows began to draw back toward the cave, some maintaining that it had been but a false alarm, and I was just beginning to draw breath again when I felt a leather boot against my shoulder, and then a cry of "Here's the villain!"

And before I knew what had happened they were all upon me, and I was dragged within the cave, and in so short a space as you would not believe if I were to tell you they had me bound and gagged. Then some were for knifing me off hand, and others were for putting me to the torture to come by the truth of my prowling, but still the fierce, black-bearded fellow, who seemed to be something of a leader amongst them, contended that I should be held for the chief to deal with.

"For, by my life!" says he, with a vil-

lainous smile, "'Tis a stout lad and will mayhap do well enough to be shot down and thereby save alive we men of wit to handle the Spanish gold."

Now almost mine eyes were starting from my head in terror, while I listened to this discussion, and it seemed the great lump in my throat must surely choke me, yet ever the thought of failing in the governor's embassy divided my heart with the thought of my sweet sister Mercy and the shame which would lie heavily upon her when it should be known that I had been destroyed by the pirates, having fallen into their hands in such manner.

Soon they gave over talking of me and going apart in a corner of the foul place, discoursed somewhat in a low tone, garnishing their talk with over many strange oaths and I gathered from the parts of it I could overhear that they were speaking of the poor fellow they had cut down, albeit I knew not what they said on it. After this two of the rascals went from the cave,

but the blackbearded one remained and there was some loud parleying as to the manner of dealing with me. Finally, it was decided that I should be held there a captive, though for how long or for what purpose I could not justly make out, and after some more talk and ribald jests, my captors disposed themselves to sleep, leaving one on guard by the mouth of the cave. And I could make out by the faint streak which glimmered through a rift of the rock that the night had spent itself at last, and that the day was dawning, for it was the fashion of those robbers to thus turn night into day, using the hours of darkness when all godly people are in their housen, for their business and their pleasure, and spending the fair day in unholy slumber.

I minded me as I lay there that it was the Sabbath day, and e'en as strange a Sabbath as I ever spent, lying there in the pirates' cave instead of sitting under the learned Mr. Mather, as had been my father's

intent when we journeyed up to Boston town.

Now all this time I had eaten nothing so that I was faint and sick from hunger, and the lashes which bound me cut into my flesh so sorely that I was like to cry out with the pain of it, and would have begged a morsel of bread from the man on guard had I dared. But whenever I made bold to turn my eyes upon him he glared at me so fierce that my tongue clave to my mouth in terror. All those coarse men had dropped sound asleep in a moment save only the blackbearded leader who lay on his side glaring about the cave and biting at his beard. But at length I knew from the sounds like the rolling of distant thunder which came out of that black cavern of his mouth that he too was asleep, and then as I looked toward the man at the door, methought he looked not so unkindly at me, so that I made bold to ask him if I might have a bit to eat. He threw me a crust from the remains of the

pirates' supper which lay scattered there, but though it hit the ground a nigh my mouth as I lay, I could not eat it for both my arms were so tightly bound that I could not move my hands. At this he gave a grim laugh, and then he unloosed the ropes which bound me so that one of my hands was free, and I seized upon the crust and ate it greedily, being well-nigh famished, for I had ever a healthy appetite, and to go for a whole day eating naught sat not well upon my stomach. And seeing how greedily I ate, my jailor cried,

"What, varlet! Famished, art thou? Here then, put that in thy gullet, and that too. 'Twill warm thy stomach and sharpen thy wits withal! Now—whence camest thou? Out with it! What's thy business prowling about these parts i' the night?"

Now, whether it was that the mug of strong waters which he gave me did indeed sharpen my wits I know not, but it came into my dull head that I would make my-

self seem even duller than Nature had made me, and so I answered—and may God forgive the lie—

“In sooth, good sir, I am but a poor lad from Salem town, and knowing some would cry out upon me for witchcraft, I fled thence into the wood, and have wandered about I know not how many hours without food, and then I lost my way and knew not how to go on, and I think I must have fell asleep, for I knew no more until I found myself set upon and indeed I know naught of witchcraft nor other wise matters, more than to eat when I be hungry.”

“S'truth, thou knowest that, I'll swear thee,” laughed the man, and then he flung me more food, but when he turned his back to take another drink of the strong waters, I hid the hunch of bread in my doublet, for I made resolve to prepare myself as best I could if haply I might, by any means, make my escape, and I knew not what sore straits I might come to.

And then I ventured that I supposed

these men, who I made no doubt had set out to hunt me down, would take me back to Salem town and I should be hanged as a malefactor after all.

But at that my jailor laughed right grimly, with a great oath, which seemed to come as natural to these men as Scripture phrases to the lips of the worthy Cotton Mather, and says he,

“ Certes, thou’rt a simple lad, but we be no witch hunters here, and ’twould tickle my fancy mightily to see us all marching into Salem town to deliver you up to the magistrates! Magistrates, forsooth! Ho, ho, ho, ho! Magistrates, boy? Nay, nay, we be not over fond of the magistrates ourselves. But beshrew me, ’tis as well that old Blackbeard yonder in the corner chose to leave your head on your shoulders, for where is the gain in useless killing, say I?”

And with that he quaffed deep from the jug and gave me to drink again, and then he said no more but sate there with his black pipe between his teeth, and the foul

air of that den and the liquor I had drunk must have made me drowsy, for full soon I fell into a deep sleep to dream that I was in sooth accused of witchcraft, and that my good father would not lift a hand to save me, but was for letting the law take its course upon me as an example to other evil-doers, and I cried out in the name of my dead mother that I knew naught of witchcraft, but all the people turned their backs upon me and would not heed, and just as they had the rope about my neck to hang me to a tree my gentle sister, Mercy, came running and gave one look into my face as if to be assured that 'twas indeed her brother, and then she turned and clasped her hands about the governor's knees and sank at his feet begging and praying him to save her dear brother from the hangmen. And then I felt the tears come into my eyes and the sweat dripping from my forehead, and I woke to find that I had indeed a rope about my neck, for the pirates made as if to drag me from the cave and

hang me to a tree. And then indeed I thought my hour had come, but at the turmoil the blackbearded leader ceased his snoring and sprang to his feet to see the cause of the outcry, and then he seized a heavy club and began to lay about him, hitting first one and then another, and they let go the rope and cowered away from him, protesting that they did but jest. But indeed and a grim jest it seemed to me as I lay in my corner, thanking God for that fierce leader who had twice saved me from death at the hands of those evil men, yet daring not to speak lest his wrath should be directed against me.

I know not how long I must have slept, being exhausted withal and overcome with the liquor, for I was not used to drink such strong beverage. But I could see that 'twas pitch dark again outside the cave, as those men sat them down to eat, none giving heed to me, till when they had finished their meal. Then the man who had been on guard before gave me to eat

and drink, and then he laid him down to sleep himself, seeming not to be disturbed at all by the loud jesting and laughing of his mates. And through all that night I lay there, feigning sleep for the most part, yet with my ears wide open to learn all I could of their plans though their talk was of other things mostly, and I could but make out that they were waiting there until it should be time for the governor's second ship to arrive. And after a time some went out of the cave and returned after while laded with big logs which they had hewed with their axes, and which I made out to be the sham guns they had talked of in the night.

At length my jailor woke from his sleep, and began to talk with the big leader in a corner, and I made out that they were speaking of me, and listened sharply until the leader cried to some of his knaves,

"Ho, rouse the dullard there, and we'll hear what he hath to say for himself."

Then the two men nearest me hauled

the ropes from my limbs, minding not that they cut sorely into my flesh as they dragged them off, and stood me on my feet, but I, being so weak and cramped from lying all that time as they had thrown me, was like to fall when they gave me a shove toward the leader, and I would have fallen straight across him but one stopped me with his club stretched out straight before him, which well-nigh knocked all the breath from my body. But then the leader bade them cease their roisterings and let me speak in peace, and then he questioned me with many strange oaths, and I repeated as nearly as I could the tale I had told to the guard.

“By my life, lad!” quoth he, when I had finished, “we’ll do better by thee than have thee hanged as a witch. We’ll make a sailor and a fighter of thee, and mayhap we’ll e’en make thee governor of the Massachusetts Bay colony! How would’st like that, boy? Thou’st little enough wit for a governor, thou poor fool! And my

certes, they'll be needing another new governor hereabouts soon, belike!"

At this there was a great laugh, and I stood there stupidly, taking care that I seem indeed not to have overmuch wit, for I had liefer they took me for a fool and a dullard for therein seemed to lie the greater safety.

"Have off with him, ye blackguards!" he shouted, and he ripped out another great oath as they took me back to bind me again with the ropes, but one called for a song, and then they all set upon me that I should sing, and when I protested that I knew no songs, they began to flout and jeer and call out that I should practice some of my witching arts for their amusement, sith the time hung heavy, and then one of them cried,

"A dance, then, a dance!" and with that he whipped out his knife, and pricked me in the legs so that I was fain to dance with the pain of it whether I would or no, and the others took up the cry and with their

clubs and knives I was made to hop and dance about that cave to their great merriment, until I fell exhausted and could no more dance though they killed me with their cruelty.

And then I saw one of them rise up and come toward me, and I wondered with what little wit I had left me what new thing they would devise to torment me, when I heard him say,

“Have done, have done! The dullard knoweth something of the country round about these parts, I’ll be bound, and mayhap he’ll be of service to us yet if ye leave the breath in his body. We be none too many, as it is.”

And so they rolled me back to my corner, and I think I must have fainted and then slept very long and sound, for I know that the day was breaking then, and when I woke, being roused by the sore pain in my limbs, the night was on again and the pirates were drinking and carousing with many a jest and story which I will not



HE PRICKED ME IN THE LEGS SO THAT I WAS FAIR TO DANCE.

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ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

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repeat and indeed I could not well understand all their jesting, trapped out as it was with so many oaths unfamiliar to mine ears, but I made out that I was the butt of many of their jokes, and there was talk of the *Infernal Majesty*, which, it seemed, was moored out at Tinker's Island, where Low was waiting for the treasure-laden ship.

Now, this Tinker's Island, I knew, was a little island lying somewhere off the coast of Marblehead, and I saw then how that the governor was partly right in his supposing that the pirates were at Marblehead, and I also knew now whence they came in the night in the little shallop which seemed to be coming from some unknown realm.

As the night went on, those men drank deeper and deeper, until one or two fell off to sleep and then the leader, who was still the soberest of all and bore his potations well, ordered that I be bound again, and two of his men sprang to do it, but being

quarrelsome with the liquor they had drunk, they could not agree on the way the ropes should be made fast, and the upshot of it was that though they bound me, I was not so securely tied as I had been before, and I made sure that so soon as they should all be asleep I could free one of my hands and it should go hard with me but I made some good use of it. The man they left on guard was not the one who had befriended me in my extremity of hunger, but a heavy fellow who had drank deep of the liquor, and when at last I heard the rumblings begin from out of that huge black beard of the leader, I looked toward the guard, and lo, he too was nodding. I waited until I saw his head sink heavily upon his breast, and then I worked my left hand loose. But I could not rise up because my legs were bound so tightly, and I could not reach to loose the ropes nor yet could I turn over from the way I lay. But I saw how the fellow who had sat nearest me had sunk over in his sleep so

that the hilt of his knife was free of his clothing, and just within reach of my hand. And so I reached out very softly and thanks to the good liquor of which he had drunk so heavily, I was able to draw the knife from his belt without waking him.

Never heart beat so loud as mine, I'll warrant, as I reached down and painfully cut the thongs which bound me, and slipping off my shoes that I might go the more softly, I picked my way between those drunken men, who were so heavy with sleep that I think even an earthquake would not have wakened them, and passed the guard at the door.

And then I came nigh being laid in as big a blunder as ever a foolish lad might be, for as I went passed that guard I be-thought me to plunge the dagger in his heart, for he it was who had been the ring-leader in the sport I had been made to furnish forth for them, and I think it was only the fear of blood which held my hand, for in those days I had never killed more

than a rabbit, and though I saw many men killed in the days to come, and e'en had a hand in it myself, I like it not now better than then. But afterward, I bethought me that if I had striven to take that foolish revenge, 'twould doubtless have been my undoing, for the fellow in his struggle would have given the alarm to his mates, and they, being roused, 'twould have been a miracle but my blood would have mingled with his.

Howsoever that may be, I passed the guard and once out of the cave, I picked my way very carefully through the brush, until I came at last to a woodland path which I knew well. And then never lad ran as I ran until I had put a goodly distance atween myself and that cave of demons, partly through a haunting fear lest they waken and pursue me, for the dawn was coming on apace, and partly that I wished to reach Boston and the governor as swift as might be. I ran until I could run no more, and then I found my-

self near to a great rock which I knew had at the one side an opening no larger than enough for a man to crawl under it with difficulty, but once beneath there was room for him to lie there, and none could ever see him. I made for it and crept under and there I lay exhausted, what with the pain of my wounds and hunger, and my feet were bleeding sore from running over the rough ground, for all this time I had carried my shoes in my hand, not daring to stop long enough to put them on.

And there I lay all that day, and the only food that passed my lips was a bit of bread which I had snatched as I came out of the cave, for I knew that lame and foot-sore as I was I could not travel fast, and moreover I dared not show myself in frequented places in the light of day, and so I misdoubted me it would be many an hour yet till I should reach Boston town; so I saved the hunch of bread which I had bestowed in my doublet to serve my turn another time. When at last it grew dark

enow so that I judged all the people would be in their housen, yet not late enow for the pirates to venture out to seek me if they should be so minded, I journeyed on and at length, when I knew by the look of the heavens that 'twould not be long before the day would dawn, I heard the striking of a clock and knew, with gladness in my heart, that I was nearing Boston town.

CHAPTER IX.

IN WHICH I DO SOME CONJURING.

It was still before daybreak of the Wednesday when I came into Boston, being particular not to come in along the highway, where I feared to encounter a tithing-man, for such were ever to me like unto a guilty conscience, which seemeth to stand across our ways with its arm outstretched.

But little did I know how my own evil pranks had set a trap for me, for scarce had I come well into the town when I beheld those same tithing-men in such numbers that it seemed in very truth that they had been visited upon the town like unto the plague of locusts in Holy Writ.

For, in every highway and byway was one of them stalking hither and thither with his long staff, so I perceived that if I

should make bold to scamper away from one I would verily run into the arms of another. So I put a bold face to it and marched ahead with a righteous air. But before I had gone a many steps one of these espied me and came stumping up, his high, sugar-loaf hat bobbing about like a tipsy church steeple.

"Where goest thou?" quoth he.

"Sooth, to where I belong," says I, very bold-like.

"Knowest thou the hour, boy?"

"That do I not, but I'm of a mind that it is too late for me to be parleying here," says I, growing bolder still.

Then he studied me very carefully, and says he,

"Whence comest thou at such an hour? Thou'lt have to tell the scene of thy roisterings and bear witness against the innkeeper who looks with such brazen face upon the laws. Methinks thou'rt very much bedraggled!"

"Of a truth, am I," says I, looking down

at my clothing, "and if *thou* had'st walked this night from Salem town, I'll warrant—"

"Sayest thou so?" quoth the tithing-man, standing suddenly aback, and then grappling me by the neck and pulling me along after him, he stumped ahead until we reached the White Crow Tavern, kept by one Master Noring, which was all in darkness save a light that hung near to a printed paper which was fastened on a space beside the door.

"Mind'st thou that?" says the tithing-man, holding me tight with one hand and pointing his long staff with the other one. "Canst read, thou rantipole?"

So I looked upon the paper, which read in this wise.

PROCLAMATION.

WHEREAS, the town of Salem and Salem Village hath been visited by the powers of darkness, many citizens thereof being converted to the Prince of Evil by sundry invisible and diabolical arts, and

WHEREAS, the Devil himself, in the very flesh, hath appeared at the Salem Jail, where his ungodly minions be lodged, holding converse with them in the night and defying the lawful Keepers of said Jail by hurling brimstone about and creating much terror thereby,

Now, therefore, do I, by authority and order of the General Court of the Massachusetts Bay, forbid all persons of whatever calling, saving only the Ministers of the Churches and the Worshipful Magistrates, who shall be of or from said town of Salem or Salem Village, to enter this town of Boston under any claims or pretexts whatsoever, until such time as these dark matters may be more fully inquired into.

AND WHEREAS, these strange occurrences being such as to treat of the Supernatural, I do hereby make known and declare on behalf of the good Ministers of this Town, who do have our fair repute ever

IN WHICH I DO SOME CONJURING. 129

near to their hearts, that whosoever shall disobey this order shall in addition to suffering the punishment provided for disrespect of the Court, be excommunicated from Church Membership, and his goods confiscated, according as provided for those who fall in displeasure of the good Ministers.

And every innkeeper or Keeper of an Ordinary or Coach Station shall forthwith post this notice on his building on receipt thereof on penalty of being put in the stocks for two hours in a hot sun.

Edward Rawson,
Secretary of the General Court.

Samuel Sewall,
Presiding Justice.

Now did I fall to pondering on what answer I should make to the tithing-man in my defence, for I knew that the new charter granted much power to the General Court, as a consequence of many petitions to the mother country. But it was no time

to keep silence whereby I might cause much delay by being taken before them ere the governor should know of it. So I made bold to say, standing straight with much dignity,

"I am on the private business of His Majesty, King William of Orange, and in truth, I will make answer to no questions from any here until so ordered by the king's governor."

"Thou liest in thy mouth!" says the tithing-man. "And I'll have evidence of thy lying tongue by confronting thee with His Excellency. Ho, Master Noyse!"

Now at this summons up stumped another stiff fellow who heard the story, and then they both stalked off with me atween them up the street called Cornhill, until finally we came to the wide lawn in the middle of which stood the Government House, with its wooden Indian swinging about on the cupola. Up the lawn they strutted with an air of much solemn righteousness, when, lo, who should we see in

the early morning light but His Excellency himself, walking about near to the house in the garden, who looked towards us and then gave such a laugh as I doubt me not he had never enjoyed since he laid eyes on me last. And, in truth, my bedraggled figure coming along between those two worthies must have been a sight for some merriment to such as are given to frivolous levity as my good father would have called it. Howsoever this may be, His Excellency gave such a laugh that the tithing-men stopped short with me and stared at the little governor.

"Leave the scapegrace for me to deal with," says the governor, after hearing the tithing-men's account. "Sooth, for aught we know, he may be the devil himself come to afflict us." And with that he despatched them, smiling very broad, and led me into the house to the room where we had conversed before.

And then I told him of all my strange adventures and mishaps as he sat there

twirling the curls of his wig, and I waited a full five minutes for him to have done laughing, when I recounted my visit to the jail.

"Beshrew me, but 'twas well thought on!" says he, and when I had made an end of all I had to say,

"Now," says he, "these gentlemen of the *Infernal Majesty* will not go far from these parts, methinks, till after the *Nymph* puts in, but they'll away from their cave, I doubt not, when they find their visitor gone. These sneakish rovers be but one of many matters weighing on my mind, though in truth, they are the only part of the business I relish somewhat withal. We'll after this Low with his log cannons as soon as may be—when the reception o' Friday night is over, belike. If we find him on this Tinker's Island 'twill be well, for pirates are like unto fish and can do naught but bluster and flounder on the land, though on the water I'll warrant every blackguard of them has the power of

ten men and some say they've nine lives like a cat. But if we are not so favored, then will we coast about a bit with the *Maid* which is now down at Scarlet's Wharf, and tow in the *Infernal Majesty* to Boston here.

"But thou'lt go see thy sister now; 'tis a fair lass, and mild and biddable, me-seemeth, for she came with Sir Harrenden Orkney to see me and my Lady Phipps a day or two ago."

I needed no urging to go and see my sister, for it had dwelt in my mind to do it, so I hastened away, all bedraggled as I was, promising His Excellency to be back in time to sup with him and my Lady Phipps. Methought the worthy Judge Sewall received me at his house with little pleasure, looking askance at my business with the governor, but he asked no questions and soon I was in my sister's room, who rose and came putting her arms about my neck in her pretty way.

"Oh, Determined," quoth she, embrac-

ing me, "I have prayed for thee, knowing not what dangers you might have fallen in and given all of my thoughts for thee, for we are in an evil day and I know not what calamity hangs over us."

"Not *all* thy thoughts, Maid Mercy?" says I, putting her at arm's length and smiling at her somewhat after a teasing fashion. "Not all thy thoughts, for I'll warrant this gay bedecked young merchant, Sir Harrenden, hath had a generous moiety of thy thoughts—aye, and mayhap thy prayers, too—Now, answer me that."

At this my sweet sister blushed overmuch and made answer, saying I was a bold lad and ever free with my tongue. But I saw as she was very much ruffled, so I changed the manner of our discourse by asking how was our renowned Mr. Mather.

"Oh, Determined," says she again. "He comes here often to discourse with the Judge and his eye seemeth always upon

me. I fear me my soul must e'en be black with envy and coveteousness and that his keen eye seeth it, for he has wonderful insight and seemeth to read every worldly thought a maid may have."

"Sooth," says I, "my sweet Mercy, of a truth it is no hard matter to read thy thoughts, for e'en such a famous dullard as myself can make shift to do it, for thou'rt as happy in thy heart as a troth-plight lover, and thy thoughts were ever pure."

She blushed again as I spake thus, but I showed her no mercy, being I suppose naught but a clumsy lubber, and not accustomed to the ways of a maid, and went on after the same fashion, she smiling and blushing by turns and sometimes making a poor effort to change our talk. But I ever would go back to it like a stubborn colt, refusing to be led.

We sat on the settle beside the fireplace and talked of my adventures, I telling her as much of them as I thought His Excellency would be willing and conjuring her

to silence on it. Then she recounted what there was to tell about the witchcraft business, saying how she had heard the General Court might act without the governor, and verily was making ready to do so, but that no sentence of death might be carried out without His Excellency's signing the warrant.

"You have spoke with His Excellency, Mercy?" says I.

"I paid my respects to my Lady Phipps and the governor two days since, as our father bade me do."

"'Twas a bold visit, methinks, without any escort," says I, smiling.

"I made not the visit alone," quoth my sister, looking very hard at her toes, which had all at once become a matter of great concern to her.

"With the Judge?" says I, for I had a mind to make her say the name with her own red lips.

"Nay, nay," says she, "not with the

Judge—but I like much the new governor and his lady.”

“My sweet Mercy,” says I, “I doubt thy pretty feet will not run away from thee, so let be thy gaze upon them, and answer me who it was that went with thee to call on the governor.” Then did she struggle mightily with herself, looking steadfastly at her foot as she moved it about following the design on the carpet which did amuse me overmuch, for I had never seen my gentle sister in such case before.

“I’ll tell thee, then,” says she, looking up very brazen and shaking her curls about. “It was Sir Harrenden Orkney! And thou’rt a notable tease, and I’ll have done with thee.” And so saying, did she rise up, shaking her head with a fair pout and going to a cupboard she brought forth a folded paper, saying, as she handed it to me,

“I received it this morning.” And with a very low courtesy, she took her seat at my side again.

"Sooth," says I, very much surprised.
"From Sir——"

"From thy friend and patron, Sir William Phipps," says my sister, smiling. So, with much astonishment, I opened the missive and read,

If Mistress Mercy Corwin would be willing to make a few days' tarrying at the Government House during her brother's stay, His Excellency and his lady would be very glad to see her at it, urging her to come before the Friday, so as to be at His Excellency's public reception on that night.

Though our good town be not as free from danger as sometime it hath been, for the Lord hath, in very truth, smote us with his sword for our many iniquities, and the Prince of Evil gaineth many converts to his wickedness among us, still the Governor, who careth but little about the devil's evil course, desireth me to say that if you come to his house he will try to make it agreeable for you, and see that thou hast some divertisement which he sayeth is the "food of youth."

Hoping that you may have a mind to more substantial food and be more desirous of the

IN WHICH I DO SOME CONJURING. 139

crumbs and morsels of faith and holiness than
to the feasts of the world,

Yours in the Lord,

NATHANIEL STOUGHTON,
Secretary to the Governor.

P. S.

My Lady Phipps asks me to request that you bring such trinkets and fineries as are suited to the English custom, and which, she sayeth, will sit attractively on thee, but I am but her secretary and mouthpiece in the matter, taking none of the responsibility for such request upon myself. I send thee one of Mr. Mather's sermons and pray that you read it and ponder it well before coming to the Government House, as it will help thee to build a fortification against temptation and sin.

"You will go, dear Mercy," says I, laying the letter and the sermon and all in her lap. "His Excellency is a good and a brave man, and we should set a pride in his friendship in spite of those hereabouts."

"My good brother," says she, "my happiness seems ever near to thy generous

heart, and I *do* like the governor overmuch, but, of a truth, I have here no gown nor furbishings of a sort for the occasion, and must e'en say him nay in my answer."

Then did I jump up from the settle, saying,

"Now will I show thee how verily I am not only an adventurer, but a true wizard withal, with such powers of conjuring as have not been seen nor writ about in all of Mr. Mather's learned books."

"Oh, Determined," cried she, very serious. "Do not speak of the sethings frivolously, I pray you."

But I only bade her keep silence, and making a magical turn with my hands, conjured her to close her eyes. And then did I bring forth from a nook in the chimney, the bundle with the flowered silk gown and the love hood and the locket and trinkets which I had hidden there before I went away. And, pulling apart the curtains of the bedstead, I spread these things thereon, conjuring her to keep blinded all

the while until finally I led her to the side of the bed and told her to ope her eyes.

"Oh, my dear, dear brother," cried she, fearfully, looking at these precious things, and thinking for a moment that I had indeed conjured them there by some evil art; but then, when she saw that they were indeed her own gear,

"Thou'rt over mindful of my happiness! How can I thank thee? For e'en in thy boy's heart, thou knowest the things which sit anear to a maid's wishes, and thy kind action chides me for my vanity."

And with this, like a true maid, she fell to straightening out the gown upon the bed, saying how I should never have laid it in such wise, and bethinking her how she might get the wrinkles out, for I had rolled it mighty small, I'll promise you.

Says I, "Thou might'st take Mr. Mather's 'Invisible Wonders' from the Judge's study table, it being a goodly volume, and press thy gown under it. Belike it will purify

the dress from the taint of witchcraft as well as take out the wrinkles."

But my sister only smiled and adventured that that would be to commit an irreverence.

"And thou'lt go," quoth I.

"I cannot find it in my heart to say nay to it now," she said, all the while smoothing out the flowered silk gown. "But tell me, Determined," says she, coming close to me and putting her arm about my neck and laying her white hand on my shoulder, "dost know—dost think——"

"Of a truth," says I, "I know he will, or belike has already invited him, so have no fear o' that. For I know somewhat of the ways of our governor, and I tell thee he has a shrewdness in seeing things which mayhap sets queerly on his rough manner, and he has seen——"

"Yes, yes," says she, hiding her head down on my shoulder, and laughing somewhat. "And thou'lt thank him and his lady, Determined, for me?"

I gave her my word for that, and we embraced each other and parted in much joy, my sister Mercy laughing on her mouth and weeping in her eyes and making a queer mixture of it. And then did I betake me back to the Government House, filled with admiration for Sir William Phipps, seeing how he was not only brave and generous and honest withal, but with a kind of gentleness which touched my boy's heart strangely.

CHAPTER X.

IN WHICH I MINGLE WITH THE MIGHTY.

Now I make no doubt you will think that we were greatly favored to be invited to such a thing as a royal governor's reception, but truly was I so much of a wild-minded youngster that, in my heart, I wished mightily that the affair was over, so that the governor and I could go on our adventure. For I had no mind to bowings and struttings and dancings and such like contrivances, wherewith the royal governors always began their administering. And verily I do think even to this day that Sir William Phipps was of the same mind about it as myself, albeit he said not so.

On the Thursday Mistress Mercy came to the Government House. My dear sister, who had ever looked askance at my rough apparel, was now so well nigh

shocked at my ragged shape that she went about the shops and purveyed for me some more fitting attire in which to bedeck me for such a notable occasion. But the governor only laughed at her troubling herself in this wise, saying that I was well enough in my tattered, faded doublet, for "methinks," says he, "that these trappings hang best on such a reckless hero."

"Thou'lt see how Sir Harrenden Orkney will be bedizened with all the colors and gorgeous laces of wicked London," quoth my Lady Phipps, as we sat at the table the day of the reception.

"Aye, a gay young spark, forsooth," says my governor. "Methinks his father hath sent him to tempt these good people of Massachusetts into a wish for such fineries, and then will send his ships laden with the abominable furbishings, as Mr. Mather calleth them, to sell them hereabouts. 'Tis a shrewd trick. I doubt me not the very vessel which brought him hither may this minute be laden with a cargo of these laces

and trinkets and what not, waiting for our gay courtier to start a fashion in them. Belike, he'll take back with him some fair Boston lass to show his shrewd old father how these London trappings sit on our colonial maidens, for he's a flint-hearted, commercial scapegrace, thinking of naught but merchandise."

And then His Excellency gave one of his great laughs, and my Lady Phipps looked very stern upon him, seeing my sister's blushing face.

It was later in that same day, when I was garbing myself, as well as my clumsy hands might do, for the evening, that I came upon the paper which I had taken from the murdered servant in the Salem woods. I had told His Excellency about the happening, but had not given him the paper, for, in truth, I had forgotten all about it, being so much filled with terror at the time of taking it, as scarcely to know what I was about. But now I unfolded it, finding it to be the poor fellow's copy of

his indenture paper, by which he was to work in the governor's service for the space of two years, and then to become a freeman of the colony, according to the contract with most of such. I was about to fold it in its proper way again to give to the governor, when I noticed there was some writing in a blank space upon it, which was not a part of the contract, being in no sort of legal phrase, as I made out, but just a list of names, one being Joseph Seaver, another John Ripley, another Edward Porter, and so on, there being as many as twenty names in all, and some crossed out with a heavy line through them and others not so; and all this was writ in the handwriting of a man who, to my thinking, had had but scant schooling, such as the poor fellow himself. But even with all these names and markings, I doubt the thing would have had no interest for me, except I remembered that I had heard His Excellency speak of one Joseph Seaver as the sailing master of his vessel, the *Sea Maid*,

which lay at Scarlet's Wharf. For I had heard him say that he meant to keep the *Maid's* crew in service ready for a voyage to Halifax when he should have the leisure for it. So as soon as might be, I went to the council room to give the paper to him.

My governor looked very stiff in his fine trappings, and not all pleased, I thought, for he wriggled his neck about in the high stock, saying he would rather be put in the pillory or lashed to a mast than have such damned contrivances in the way of his comfort. But his distemper anent these things was soon gone in his interest when he examined the names on the paper. He screwed his lips very tight and sat down in his big chair, saying nothing at all for the space of three minutes. Then says he, very sober,

"My lad, there is no evidence of any kind here, but only a sign and mayhap not even that, but I fear me that these seamen of mine have been tampered with and be-like some of them have made a favorable

answer to it, and others given a solid nay. Seaver's name is not crossed out, but that has no meaning to me. Belike the fellow that lost his head brought back good news to Low from some treacherous embassy, or refusals, for aught I know. He was no seaman, and they would kill him either way of it. But the fellow visited the ship after he had first left it and made these notes for himself or for some one else, that's a truth there's no gainsaying." And the governor threw the paper down before him, looking very disgusted as if the foulness of what he feared was too much for him to stomach.

In good time the worthies began to arrive. There was Judge Sewall, with his velvet cap and his cane and his solemn face, and Dr. Increase Mather, full of years and Scripture phrases, and cold enough to freeze one in midsummer. And there was the famous Cotton Mather, his son, with his fluffy wig and his bow legs and his hard visage. And there was Mr. Stoughton,

who was as thin as a tithing-stick, in spite of his name, and there was Mr. Rawson, also, secretary to the court, and a mort of others with their ladies, though not over many of the young people. In the midst of it all I was presented to Sir Harrenden Orkney by my Lady Phipps, who still kept my sister Mercy at her side. He was of a very fair presence, being of manly stature with an open face, but decked out in such a manner that methought he looked overmuch like the pictures of King Charles the Second who had been of very ungodly fame in the colonies, not so much for his tyranny as for his rampant merriment.

“Methinks the devil will never show his face in such an assemblage as this,” says Sir Harrenden, in a low tone, looking about him and smiling, and I must tell you that in very truth, he would keep saying such things as this all that evening, making me to laugh so that often I could not keep it in, and especially did I have much difficulty when he spake with Mr. Cotton

Mather, for verily the reverend minister did not perceive in his wisdom how the gay young Londoner was poking jibes at him as he talked. But I know that Sir Harrenden gave himself much amusement in this wise, for my sister and me were mostly near unto him and heard much of his flippant jesting. At one time he asked Mr. Cotton Mather might it not be a shrewd piece of business to purvey brimstone from His Infernal Highness for heating the Boston houses in the winter, at which Sir William Phipps gave one of his famous laughs, which put the reverend minister in a high distemper. Then did he ask Judge Sewall whether the devil could bein duced to testify against himself in the General Court and how it would be about believing his testimony, seeing his general character.

The worthy Judge made no joke of it, saying very gravely, that there was no law covering it. But that gay young gentleman was very friendly with the governor and his lady and much of a favorite with

them as I could see. But of all the other matters which I noticed, there were two which set me thinking. One was the cold manner of the Boston worthies toward our governor, for they were mostly to be seen in groups talking among themselves, and I know that they were designing to make full use of all the liberties granted them under the new charter, and were preparing to deal after the manner of their own liking with certain affairs and especially in convening the General Court.

The other matter which caused me to ponder somewhat was that Mr. Cotton Mather kept his sharp eye on my sister, during all that evening, and watched her departure with young Sir Harrenden, who, I must confess, was ever at her side. But his addresses were no matter of unpleasant concern to me, for I liked him mightily, e'en in face of all his frivolous and easy manner and apparent worldliness, albeit his fine manners made me seem to myself all the more awkward in my clumsiness.

Now, when all the good worthies were gone, it being as late as ten o'clock, His Excellency and my Lady Phipps made request of Sir Harrenden to sup with us before he should go to his tavern. So we all went into the supper room for some refreshment. As we sate about the table, His Excellency, smiling, asked the fine young gentleman if he were not afraid of being arrested by the tithing-man and mayhap tried for witchcraft before the learned General Court, by going through the streets at that late hour, at the same time urging upon him that he stay the night at the Government House.

"Nay," said Sir Harrenden. "I must rest to-night on my vessel which is having some repairs made. I left her but to come here for a space," and so saying, he smiled across the table at my sister, who cast down her eyes and blushed somewhat.

"If thou'lt tarry with us till the morning," says His Excellency, "my lord prime minister here, Master Corwin, and myself will go down to the wharves with you."

(He was ever at his jests, was my governor.) "Belike I must give my own vessel an overhauling."

At that, Sir Harrenden set down his glass and looked in great astonishment at His Excellency. No one spake, and I felt that somewhat was amiss. His Excellency sat back in his chair at the head of the table with a very strange look growing on his face, and so it was for full a minute and there was no sound in the room at all.

"Well," says the governor, at length. "There'll be no witchcraft in going to my own vessel, think'st thou?"

"Truth, there *would* be a mort of witchcraft in it if thou did'st such a thing to-morrow," quoth Sir Harrenden, "for knowest thou not that the *Sea Maid* has left her moorings twenty-four hours ago, and put out to sea?"

CHAPTER XI.

IN WHICH SIR HARRENDEN SURPRISES US.

Now for the space of full five minutes, or so it seemed to me, did the little governor stare straight and hard at young Sir Harrenden, and I stared at the governor, while my Lady Phipps and my sister looked from one to the other, not knowing what all this matter should be about.

"The *Maid* agone! And where?" then says my Lady Phipps, looking at Sir Harrenden with wonder sitting on her countenance.

"Ah, where indeed? I know not," says Sir Harrenden. "Methought she must have put out on His Excellency's bidding, or I'd have apprised thee before now; she sailed under a fair wind this time last night, and I saw her with mine own eyes, as I was giving some orders to the men on board my

father's vessel for the landing of some tea casks."

The governor twirled his wig, looking from one to other of us and none of us spake so much as a word. And then Sir Harrenden, who was ever of a worldly turn and had a fashion with him to jibe somewhat at the little governor, smiled at the thought of such a brazen act happening under His Excellency's very nose, and of his own sailing master putting forth without so much as a word to the vessel's owner.

And then His Excellency, who, in sooth, had ever a laugh waiting on his lips for whoso should invite it out, began to smile and then to laugh, and being ever more ready to laugh than to fret whatever might befall, he e'en puckered his face up and had it out with himself, hitting the table with his fist, and saying that it was a brazen, impudent trick and that Low was a shrewd varlet and ever ready with his evil contrivings. And seeing him thus

take the thing agreeably, we all fell to laughing on it too, my Lady Phipps whispering to Mercy that it was better for the governor to spend his breath in laughing than in making oaths, for that he was sure to do the one or the other in such a case, and both seemed to be great novelties in Boston town, for aught that she had learned that evening.

At length the governor found his breath, and says he,

"'Tis a mighty comfortable price I've had to pay for tarrying here to make acquaintance, and with these rascals hovering about; 'tis a justice on my tardiness." And with that, he began to unfasten his high ruff as if it were in very truth the cause of this evil pass, and as though he would have done with such like trappings.

"I am willing to tell ye," says he, tugging still at his ruff, "there's a good two weeks gone waiting for this night of bowings and struttings and witchings and naught it's brought me but the loss of my vessel, and

the laugh of this young—" (He gave his lace ruff a smart pull.) "and the laugh of this young merchant who hath no fear of royal authority!"

"Methinks," says Sir Harrenden, smiling at my sister and me over the table, "that if Your Excellency could but get the ruff off it would mend matters a mort and give thee a chance to say thy thoughts more favorably on this scapegrace, Seaver," and so saying, he came around the table to the governor's chair, and unfastened the ruff from His Excellency's neck.

At this, the governor settled back in his chair and fell a-pondering, being now, I suppose, fully minded of the evil case and much distraught over it, moreover, somewhat abashed as it seemed to me that such a band of rascals could have the wit to spirit his own sailing master away under his very nose. But, in effect, the trick was not so much surprising only that it happened to the royal governor, for our good colony had seen a mort of just such cursed

pranks from pirates who were ever carrying their evil practice with a brazen and daring hand, confounding our good people with their shrewdness. And they were a tempting pack of marplots with their ill got grains setting brazenly upon them, and their bold swaggerings, so that many an honest ship's master had had his honesty tempted or shaken out of him by these wicked coast brethren, as they were often called.

Now as we all sat there waiting for the governor to speak, did it come to my lubbering wits how deep was this shrewdness of Sir Edward Low's, for it came to me of a sudden how the godless sea robber had had his men upon the land, and had used the witchcraft affair to confound poor Goodman Proctor, and make him lay the blame for the forging of the manacles to the devil. And now, methought, being fully minded of the governor's bravery and shrewdness, had he wheedled His Excellency's very crew and vessel from Boston

so they might not sail against him, knowing full well how the governor might find it mighty hard to get another vessel for two very goodly reasons: the one, that His Excellency was not of an over fair repute among the Boston worthies, and the other that the whole colony of goodmen were of a great timidity as to fighting these water varlets, and would not so much as risk their lives to help him nor even send their vessels.

"Beshrew me, 'tis a deeper trick than I looked for," says His Excellency, thinking, and seeming to be in a kind of dreamy pondering. "Gone to join that rantipole, Low, and his crew yonder, I'll be bound. Truth, 'tis more than a cutlass we've to put a face to, for it's a plot, methinks. And how I'm to have after these gentlemen of wit, to-morrow, being hereft of my vessel, I know not."

Now, Sir Harrenden and the others knew naught of the pirates, saving indeed what little I had confided to my sister Mercy, so

that this talk of my master's was all a riddle to them, and seeing this, I suppose, he thought it well to expound it to them, the more as he would fain share with his lady what to him seemed a merry jest. And so he told them the whole tale, not forgetting the poor fellow who had been slain in the woods, and from whom I had taken the paper which showed forth, as he now supposed, those of the *Sea Maid's* crew who had secretly owned the pirate, Low, for their master.

"And now," says he, "it stingeth like a blister on a raw cut to give up my own ship, the *Sea Maid*, to aid in the capture of the *Nymph* with the treasure aboard her, so I must e'en purvey me another vessel as soon as may be and man her well to lay those jolly buccaneers athwart before yon ship arrives with my good Spanish dollars. Eh, lad, how think you?"

But before I had time to answer—though, to say truth, my thick wits had not yet bethought me what answer to make—up

spake my fine gentleman, Sir Harrenden, and says he,

“Governor, there lieth my father’s ship at Scarlet’s Wharf, and methinks the repairs should be about finished by now. ’Tis but a merchant vessel, ’tis true, but if you can make shift to fit her out for this expedition, ’tis a goodly bark, and strong and tough, and she’s aye at your service. And, moreover, I would pray you that I make one of your party, for I would e’en have a hand at fighting the pirates myself.”

Now, at that, did the governor open his two eyes very wide, and laugh his merry laugh.

“Thou’dst fight the pirates, eh? Nay, lad, ’twould never do, for thy fine laces and ruffles and ribands would be amuck with blood in a brace of shakes when we come upon yon rascally varlet, Low. But I’ll take thy father’s ship, boy, and thankee, for ’twill do as well as another when we get a few guns aboard her and a round score of good fighting men, and thou canst

e'en lay to here in Boston town and mind the ladies while we ungallant men are away, and keep thy ruffles clean."

Now, I bethought me that Sir Harrenden did not all like this jibing of the governor's, for though over given to arraying himself in fine garments, he was yet a bold and brave man enow, and no man likes to be made a coward before a young and fair lass, and so he made answer, somewhat angered,

"Nay, Your Excellency, it needs not that a man be clothed in homespun that he wear a heart in's body, and I can e'en upon occasion lay aside my laces and ruffles and ribands, as thou namest them, and handle a gun or a cutlass with thyself."

"Now, saw ye ever the like o' that?" quoth the governor. "Nay, lad, I did but jest. Canst not spare a man his jibe? Shalt come with us, and thou'lt be gay and welcome. And I'll take my davy, thou'lt be the bravest among us all, not saving

good Master Low himself. Natheless, thou must lay aside all thy fineries, for such fripperies go not well with that same cutlass and gun thou spakest of but now. And by that same token, we must have done with jesting, and see to getting the vessel ready, for we've serious work ahead of us, and no time to lose, neither."

So, without so much as waiting for the morning, did His Excellency and Sir Harrenden betake themselves down to Scarlet's wharf for an inspection of the young merchant's vessel. They did not ask me to fare with them on their errand, thinking mayhap that I should be better in my bed, but I made bold to call from the doorstone after them in a jibing way, as they went out into the darkness, to look sharp for tithing-men, whereat my sister, who stood near to me, was much shocked at my familiar manner with the king's governor, and counselled me to more humility.

We stood outside the large door of the Province House listening while the voices

of Sir Harrenden and His Excellency died away as they went farther along the dark road, until there was no sound about but the creaking and rattling of the wooden Indian as it blew around on the cupola above.

Then, my dear sister came and put her arms about me as she was ever wont to do in our own home in Salem, but I was such a clumsy-minded lubber that I would ever put my love for her in some jesting form, for fear it might not sit well on my boy's nature to show it e'en to her, though I did love her mightily. So I said,

"Maid Mercy, thou'lt not tarry here outside the door, for methinks it were high time we two should be asleep in our beds, and Sir Harrenden will not be back this night."

"I had no mind of his coming back this night," said she, "but is he not of a brave turn, Determined?"

"Good sooth!" says I. "He's no such warrior as thou art, for I'll warrant me he's

made his surrender to thee ere this in fine terms."

Now, again did her little foot come poking out from under the ruffle of our precious flowered silk gown, and go tracing figures on the step as though she should be spelling the answer there. And this being most of all what I liked to see in her, for the manner of it sat well upon her sweet modesty, did I draw her close unto me, tasting her fair, white cheek as a brother might, and she laughed a little and rested her head on my shoulder, for a lass is ever soft and biddable in such case, and even my lad's wits could see more with each day how that our gay and bedizened young noble sat very nigh to her heart. And now, as her head rested there, it began to irk me that I had taken the affair so much in jesting wise, and I resolved that I would have done with flouting and jeering on it, and treat her pretty fashion of shamefacedness with a tenderer concern. For, of a truth, it is a sweet thing, and wondrous too, me-

thinks, to see a lass in such wise and hardly reverend for a lubbering, adventure-seeking stripling to be jibing on the feelings that the good God has ordered to change a maid's soul. So, I said to her that Sir Harrenden was without any doubts a brave man and that I did like him for his many favorable parts. She said nothing to this, and we stood there silent, her head still on my shoulder, her tears and her laughing all mixed together like a sermon being preached in a playhouse.

"It is a sad time that thy happiness falls in, my sweet sister," says I, "and I pray that the events may be favorable to this joy thou hast."

"Thou likest him then, Determined?" says she, never looking at me, "and is it only the events thou fearest?"

"Yes, only the events," says I. "There seemeth to be a cloud gathering that will only clear after the storm and methinks it will bring grief into many of our lowly homes."

"Dost think the governor believes in the witchcraft, dear brother?"

"Nay, that does he not," says I, "but it is not for us to say that there are none. The royal governors have not such sway under King William's new charter. Mayhap the colony is not so godly as the Lord would see it. You and me are but maid and stripling in it, but thou hast always done thy spinning, Mercy, and been of an humble heart, my dear, dear sister."

"And thou, Determined, dost thou pray always?"

"Aye, I have never forgot it, Mercy."

"And if one of a pure heart were sorely tempted by the converts in this unholy art, how would the tempting come, think you, Determined?"

"I know not, sister, but verily they would not come to tempt and wheedle a pure heart—that do I know."

"But thou'rt sure thou prayest often, Determined?"

I put my arms about her and pressed her

tenderly to me, and smoothed back her hair that was falling loose about, and while I held her so I minded me that she was but a frail lass with but little of even a woman's strength and that her mind was sorely troubled. I had good reason, ere many days more, to think of her troubled mind of that night when we stood on the Province House steps; and as for her frail, little, slender body, the thought of it got mixed up somehow with my love for her when I left her to go to my room for sleep, and I thought how she was somewhat of a kind with my poor mother who had died in a decline, and I wished that she might spend less of her time in her chamber spinning flax, according to the ordinance of the General Court for young maidens.

My poor wits were distraught with many things that night as I took myself to the little chamber under the cupola, and lying in my bed waited to hear the governor come in, but finally fell asleep to an ungodly dream that my good father was turned pirate

along with the Reverend Cotton Mather, who was chasing our new governor about the deck of a brigantine with a book of Psalms in one hand and a cutlass in the other, and that Judge Sewall, of the General Court, was sitting on a windlass of Low's brig, waving his red velvet cap in the air and fanning the black pirate flag with a smith's bellows.

CHAPTER XII.

IN WHICH WE PUT FORTH AFTER SIR EDWARD.

IF you be as impatient of this journeying forth as myself was to get about it, I'll venture 'twill be no time to weary you with discoursing on the preparations. Sir Harrenden's ship was a pretty enough brig, though something stubby in the bows as the young man said, but fair enough for a merchant. Being myself but a landsman and a stripling withal, I knew little of her qualities, but I was ever of opinion that she deserved a goodlier repute than the little governor gave her. For he had never done with naming her a spinster because she had carried a cargo of tea, and was ever flouting on her being a soft-mannered, slow bark, trapped out with a fierce name, for she was called *The Vengeance*. He would pace the deck of her, jibing on it when Sir Harren-

den should be near to hear it, and Sir Harrenden must needs jibe on the governor's being tricked by the rascal, Seaver, so that it was very comfortable to hear them laughing and making free and matching their wits, albeit in such flimsy talk, as my father would have held it.

We put out as soon as ever the ship and our people could be got ready, which was four days in all, the crew being fifteen sturdy fellows the governor had summoned together, some of them of Sir Harrenden's ship, though serving of their own will, for his crew were on leave.

His Excellency discoursed with them in his own fashion, and it was a fine sight to see how he put them in a favorable temper to the emprise with the way he had ever about him; like the day, forsooth, when he came by my stout liking only by calling me by my name, Determined, which was not much done, as I told you, and doing it in a fashion to make the name of a piece with my character. We had two small cannon

out of the castle in the harbor, there being but three in it and the governor leaving one for the town's defense by way of a precaution and to confound the devil if need be, as he told Sir Harrenden. We had each a cutlass except myself, and there were plenty of pistols and powder aboard for all hands.

The pirates, as much as we could know from the bits of discourse I had overheard in the cave, were eleven men with three cannon, not to count the makeshift wooden ones with which they were expecting to confound the *Nymph*, which must be now well on her voyage to Massachusetts with her two cannon and all the governor's precious treasure—except for the new title on his name, which he shrewdly told us he had brought with him so the *Nymph* would not be overloaded. We knew that Low had the *Infernal Majesty* and was expecting a sloop from some foreign port, mayhap from the Indies, as the governor supposed. It beseemed that there was

ne'er so much as a doubt that the sneakish Seaver with his crew had joined them with the *Sea Maid*, there being twelve men of them to man her, but no cannon nor arms.

"And belike," said His Excellency, "when Sir Edward Low saw the dowry my buxom *Maid* brought to him was naught but a little pack of cowards, he'll have played his famous hatchway trick and murdered them all."

In the likeliest way of it, there were the eleven pirates and mayhap as many more if the sloop had put in, and with three vessels to press the matter, which should be manned all by real knights of the cutlass, as the governor called them, and not backward in drawing their cutlasses, neither.

Sir Harrenden's sailing master, Hallet, commanded the crew, and was a shrewd, honest seaman, methought, but took the little governor's gibing anent the vessel in very sober fashion, for verily I believe he thought of her as a lover of his lass.

'Twas bright morning when I bade a fair good-bye to my sister, and hastened from the Government House to Scarlet's Wharf, where I found that all of our party were already aboard and the ship ready to sail, there being now a very fair wind. Our destination was the Tinker's Island, as you will know, and we were not long in coming there.

If there be any among you that know it not, I will tell you that the Tinker's Island is a little speck of land nigh off the Marble-head Neck; but I doubt me most of you that are lads hereabouts could tell me a mort of things anent it learned in your own journeyings there when ye should have been better employed sitting under good Master Dillingham, and that I'll say for your behoof, though in sad earnest I never heard him preach myself.

There were many fishing craft in the waters that-a-way that hailed us, desiring to know what was toward and if we should be making for Ipswich, and finding

never so much as any sign of pirates at the island, it being all in clear view, we lay at anchor thereabouts to discourse with some of these Marbleheaders as to the best way of it. Several of their little smacks came alongside, and there was some discoursing and parleying between Sir Harraden and these fellows. Soon it was gossiped about among them that the new royal governor was aboard, and I could hear them chattering away aneath me in their queer fashion, and speaking of the "Rrry'l Guvn'rrr", and once or twice I heard the word, "pirrr'te", but when Sir Harrenden laid himself to catechise them on what ship had been moored in those parts, they professed to have no knowledge of it, shaking their thick, curly heads and saying, "Ne'rrr a b'rrk" many times, as if they had been counselled in that wise. They had it that no vessel had been moored thereabout, which I knew to be a lie, and that none had touched there or had any transactions in those waters. Their lying

seemed to sit very lightly on their lips, which irked Sir Harrenden so that he soon had done with asking them questions, giving over in much distemper and stalking away across the deck, saying they were of a kind to puzzle the devil himself, when His Excellency, coming up to the bulwarks, hailed the fellows who were about to make off.

"My good lads," says he, "I'm of a mind that none of ye'll know me, sith being honest fellows, ye have little time for struttings in Boston town, but I'm our king's royal governor, and ye, I'll warrant, are all his good subjects. Now I've a very favorable thought to such as ye, for being somewhat of a seafaring man myself, I'm of a sort with ye in a certain fashion, though lately burgeoned forth into the king's governor. And I'll deal with ye in a plain manner, being naught but a plain man, as ye'll see. It needs not to tell you I'm come on a matter that must be shrewdly pressed, and 'tis as much for your own

behoof as for any other honest Englishman's that I'll do it. Ye'll understand that a lie spake to me in such a transaction is like a lie laid to His Majesty, for I'm on His Majesty's business. Now, 'tis a stout knave that'll set out to win a livelihood in the face of the law, and there's no gainsaying that, e'en when mayhap there may be a cargo or two of booty in it. But marry, 'tis a notable fool forsooth who'll help the transgressors and then be cheated in the bargain without so much as a farthing's gain!

“My lads, there's been a crew of damned thievish water rats, caught in much poverty and contriving to mend their fortunes in the midst of ye and about Salem. And if there's anything, I'll tell ye, that an honest man can ne'er stomach, 'tis a pirate laid in adversity, for then it is they'll be sneaking and wheedling and lying in their throats and using their wits ashore, confounding simple folk and making famous promises, as belike ye've known them do. But I'll

tell ye, my good lads, what time their fortunes are mended and they hoist their dirty sails for the Indies they'll more than like forget the little matter of reckoning and mayhap press some of your buxom wenches into the service, giving a stout laugh to it if ye say them nay.

"Now, I've nineteen honest subjects of the king aboard and two cannon, and that's not much as ye'll know, for such an emprise. But mayhap ye may have heard it said that one man in the right way of it has the larger moiety at the end, and I'm sailing with that word. Now, it's this I'll say to ye, lads; that if I can make shift to come by a little piece of the plain truth to use for a weapon, why, 'twill help me mightily."

There was a little space of silence then after the governor had made an end, when up rose a great, hulking fellow with a very shamefaced look sitting on his brown face, and says he, plucking off his cap and clinging to the mast of his smack,

“Y’rr Rrr’yl Hign’ss, wi’ y’rr leave, I’ll be knowin’ wh’rrr they arrr, b’like.”

And at this I saw how our governor had taken a shot among them for an honest man and had hit one in the first try of it.

“Speak up, then, my lad,” says he, leaning far down over the bulwarks. “They’ll have promised ye a share in some treasure which they’re to bring hereabouts, I’ll be bound; is that the way of it?”

There was, in very truth, only the one way to answer Sir William Phipps; if a man had so much as a spice of the truth in him, it was certain to come jumping out when he asked a question. So after a little shifting, the fellow began telling what he might know of Sir Edward Low and his jolly gentlemen, putting in a little spice of lying now and again, but doing very famous, for a Marbleheader. He rolled out his r’s so roundly that we could not make out the purpose of all his discourse, but this much we learned from what he said. That Low’s ship, *Infernal Majesty*,

had been moored off the little island, and that her men had been swaggering about among the fisher folk, having no money withal, but making mighty free in their purveying for all that, using threats or promises according to their fancy; that they had come by some fire-arms, promising to have an accounting when they should return to the island after a certain emprise; that the Marbleheaders had given them some victuals, knowing naught of the manner of their business (though this last stuck in my headpiece for a whit the other side of the truth); that a many times some of their number had pulled over to the Salem shore in a little shallop, but always in the night, which I knew to be rightly told from what my own eyes had seen; that five days ago a vessel had been seen off the island in the early morning, and that the *Infernal Majesty* had put out to join her after an exchanging of signals.

“Was yon craft a sloop, my lad?” asked the governor.

"A brr'g, Y'rr Highn'ss," spoke the man.

"And ye'll have come by no tidings of the port they were for, now?"

The fellow would have it that he knew naught of where they should be going, but said that the day before the *Infernal Majesty's* putting forth, one of Low's men had been at the ordinary in Marblehead village, and in the midst of some roistering sea talk and much tipsy boasting and swaggering, had asked the innkeeper, worthy Master Wattel, about the story of Anthony Thatcher's shipwreck, seeming to have great concern as to the place of it, and enquiring how much of a run it might be by sea from Boston, calling Goodman Wattel apart and discoursing with him in a whisper.

"Your Excellency," says I, when the fellow was through speaking, "if it be Master Thatcher's island that he would wot of, I can give a very comfortable account of it myself; for 'tis scarce two miles off the east point of the cape a bit north

of Gloucester, and I mind me now it hath before now been a favored place with pirates according to my father, albeit one of much danger by reason of the rocks."

At this the governor made his thanks to the fellow, speaking in very favorable terms on his honesty, but the wind being down, we lay at anchor in the Salem Bay as the night came on, putting as good a face to the calm as might be, but somewhat irked on it, for the governor, as he said, was in high humor for a hand's turn with Sir Edward Low and his jolly buccaneers. It was while we lay at anchor that night with never so much as a breath of air to stir His Majesty's colors that His Excellency told us, as we ate our snack, anent his raising the treasure from the Spanish Galleon off Tortuga Isle, with pirates hovering all about him like a swarm of buzzards.

And mayhap I will tell you that tale some day an' ye care to hear more of an old man's ramblings, for 'twas a pretty adventure, I'll promise you.

CHAPTER XIII.

IN WHICH WE HAVE SOME VISITORS.

As the evening came on there seemed a moistness which soon began to grow into a mist that e'en made all the things upon the shore look dull and gray. I mind me now, as I ponder on the transactions of that time how that the dampness while we lay at anchor just east of the little island had such a potency to it that long before the haze was seen the gunwale was all spotted with little sweaty drops that were not of the sea nor withal of rain, and that all the things which stood about the deck did have a musty odor to them from the dampness in the air. It got into my two legs queerly, making them to feel weary and spent as I should have lately walked overmuch. And no matter what I set my hands to, it had a clammy wetness. Then the soft mist began

to thicken and the little housen of the distant village to die away in it. And soon the whole bay was in a dense fog so that verily it seemed as if the air might be made of milk. I have never known another fog like to that for thickness and the danger of being aboard ship in the midst of it troubled my landsman's wits sorely, albeit the rest of our company took it very comfortably.

The governor and Sir Harrenden sate in the round house discoursing cheerily, and sometimes I would e'en go up the steps and rest my arms on the open window, hearken- ing to their talk. They were saying it would be somewhat to our behoof to go into the village at morn and catechise Master Wattel shrewdly on his transaction with the fellow of Low's crew, for the governor opined that the innkeeper had some mes- sage for the sloop's captain—if haply she should put in—telling him where he might find the *Infernal Majesty*.

"What cheer, mate?" says His Excel- lency to me in the comfortable fashion he

ever had, "Ye'll see how that little visit in the cave has tumbled over all Master Low's plans for meeting with his good people, and I'll warrant he'll have a little private reckoning with thee by times."

Sir Harrenden smiled, as if to say I need not have any fears, and in truth I had none saving only those that should be caused by the fog. The denseness all about, and the steady ringing of our bell which one of the men kept striking with a hammer, had put me in such a state of apprehending that I could not stay quiet nor in one place, but must needs go pacing fore and aft. I knew that we would put forth for the east point of Cape Ann as soon as might be, and that in all supposing it would be but a short run there. The thought of what was toward and the fear of the fog which had me much distempered, e'en seeing the easy face our company put to it, kept me in such a state that I had no stomach for my bunk, but could only wander about in aimless fashion, now listening through the round

house window and now pacing to and fro on the deck and discoursing with the watch or with good Master Hallet, who sate on one of the steps of the quarter-deck, with his pipe.

All that while the fog seemed ever waxing thicker, until when midnight was nigh upon us, 'twas of such a denseness that we could see naught—not even within the ship's length, and the stale, damp taste of it that crept into my mouth irked me strangely, e'en making me distempered and sullen.

Down in the forecastle, nigh all the men were in their bunks, but some still played at shuttle under the hazy lanthorn light that hung on the beam. For the fog seemed in truth to have stolen down the hatch, dimming the small flame so that the men could not well see. I clomb up the ladder again closing the scuttle as I made out of the damp, foul hole, and took myself aft and up to the round-house. Master Hallet had gone within it, and those three were

discoursing on the pirates and their ungodly trade as I came in. The governor's handsome sword, all gold mounted and bedizzened with many carved designs, lay on the table.

"Sit ye down, my lad," says he, "and have a care (for I was handling the sword); 'tis a very pretty bauble, think ye?"

"Methinks," says I, taking it by the handle end, "that I've a stouter fancy for this end of it than for t'other if it came to a choice."

"And that's a very shrewd thought of thine," says he, with his famous laugh. "Mayhap ye'll see the other end of it much engaged e'er long, and 'twill ne'er be the first time, I'll promise ye."

"'Twill be drawn in a stout cause," says young Sir Harrenden. Then they went on with their discoursing which I had stopped by my coming in.

"So ye'll have it that a cutting down in the taxes is the fairest way of dealing with the pest," says the governor.

"Truth," answered Sir Harrenden, "'twill put these sturdy, sermon-fed provincials in the way of purveying their goods from an honest source. I'll adventure they'd liefer come by their worldly gear in honest fashion through fair trade with London than to barter with these gentlemen of the coast. This very craft that Your Excellency calleth a spinster——"

"Avast!" says the governor, smiling, "she's a very pretty little dame——"

"Well, we'll not parley on that," says Sir Harrenden, smiling too. "In any way of it, she put into Boston with as fair a cargo as they'll find this side the water, but the worthies will none of it on account of the royal taxes, and, more by token, 'tis snug in Master Seargent's warehouse while I'm saying it, taxes and all! The pirates, as thou'lt see, charge no tax, and, methinks yon godly Boston worthies are coming by a very favorable thought on them thereby."

"By my head," says His Excellency, "the jolly buccaneers can spare to lay out

their gear very cheap and still come by a comfortable profit on't."

"There's no gainsaying that," says Master Hallet, "and I'm of a mind the wind sets that-a-way that ye'll find it very hard to make yon General Court condemn them."

Now, this manner of talk did enlighten me somewhat on the easy tolerance of our goodmen in the matter of those wicked sea-rovers, albeit, I was amazed overmuch at how they winked at their own godliness when it came to a matter of shrewd trading. And I e'en came to have a very sore misgiving on Mr. Cotton Mather's reasons for denouncing the governor's putting forth after Sir Edward and his band. For, of a very truth, as ye'll all know, the goodmen of these New England parts (and eke the goodwives too) had ever a shrewdness in bargaining second only to their piety and godliness—and sometimes running apace with it.

It was while they were discoursing in such wise, and so giving me a strange mort

of things to ponder on as to the ways of my solemn and worthy elders of Boston, who would frown down a fashion in love-hoods like to a wicked pestilence, that we heard a sound that made us all to start.

"Stand to go about!" cried Sir Harrenden, getting up from his seat.

"Nay, nay, my lad," says His Excellency, with a smile. "Give them but a chance to drop their anchor. We know not what craft you may be."

This was e'en true, but in the saying it he made admission there was some craft near, and my heart went thumping in my chest so as I had never known it do before. Whatever craft it was, she had blown no horn, neither rung any bell but slunk into the outwaters of the foggy bay all in danger and in silence. We could hear the creaking of her capstan on our larboard side as it gave out the cable, and it seemed to be but a matter of a dozen yards away. Meanwhile, our fog-bell (which belike had guided the other vessel) was ringing stead-

ily. Then there was no sound more from the craft and the ghostly silence of our close but unseen neighbor in the fog put me in a greater state of suspense and apprehending than before. We came all out on the quarter-deck, walking soft, and gazed off to larboard in every direction into the dense, solid whiteness.

"An' she be a Marbleheader, belike we'll know it by her people's voices," says His Excellency, and then, leaning over the rail, he called out, loud and clear,

"What ship is that, mates?"

There was no word, and he called again. But e'en still there was no answer to it, and the governor screwed up his face and went down the steps of the quarter-deck and over to the starboard rail and listened. We had all followed after him, and now stood very quiet as he leaned far over, with his big, brown hand to his ear. There was no sound saving only the gentle swishing of the water below us. Then the governor spake very low to Master Hallet, who

went over to the larboard side, off which the strange craft had anchored, as near as we could know, and watched. I noticed he had drawn his sword. Then Sir Harrenden likewise went over, taking a stand along the larboard rail a little fore of Master Hallet. I watched all this with my heart thumping, but said never a word, as no one of them spake to me, nor seemed to notice me at all.

"Come, my lad," then says the governor, "We'll down in the fo'c's'le."

"Doth Your Excellency surmise 'tis the sloop in to join Low?" I asked.

"Why, to make a wizard's prophecy, the trifling evidence hath a very bad smack to it. If ye'll ever go to sea, my lad, ye'll know that when a craft taketh not favorable to answer that question, 'twill be a very fair moment to draw your sword—though belike you sheathe it dry again, laid in a blunder."

"They sounded not to starboard," says I.

"Nay, but an' if we're boarded, 'twill be

on the side they think we're least looking to it; thou'rt not afeard, my lad?"

I told him stoutly that I was not, but that I hoped he would keep me as nigh to him as might be.

"It hath that look to it," says he, clapping his big, brown hand on my shoulder. "Ye'll have heard somewhat of our discouraging i' the round-house, Determined? I'm a little afeard, being but a lad in the Province, ye may come by a wrong thought on these matters. Mayhap His Majesty's taxes be a bit high, and I'm minded to seek a way of mending that error somewhat, as well as my humble wits may, but ye'll understand there's ne'er any virtue nor defense for buying what's been stole, for dishonesty in any fashion can ne'er straighten any coil, be it of the devil's own winding; ye'll understand that, my boy?"

Again he clapped his big hand over my shoulder, drawing me close to him in the doing it, and I did honor him mightily in that moment, I'll warrant you. I told him

I was certified to that and that my wits would ne'er get befogged on't, and then I stooped and lifted the scuttle for him and we went down into the forecastle. He spake with the men in his own way, calling them mates, and telling them what was toward, as much as he deemed they should know. 'Twas a fine sight how they came forward with a will at his first summons, buckling on their swords and cocking their pistols. Eight of them (the whole sturdy crew of them had been in Sir Harrenden's service on a score of voyages) were stationed along the starboard rail and the rest of us on the larboard side where Sir Harrenden and Master Hallet were already posted. There was naught said of using the cannon, but I heard His Excellency say to Master Hallet that if 'twas to be a boarding we were to face, why then, there was a fair chance of coming by a very pretty sloop unhurt by the guns, to use in our emprise.

It came about as the governor had said,

for full soon one of our men from the star-board watch came over and summoned the governor across. I went with him, and there, standing quite still, we could hear a little, steady plashing of the water not far away. Nearer and nearer it came until 'twas just beneath us, and peeping over the gunwale I saw a half a score of swarthy, loose-clothed, black-haired varlets scrambling up the side of the *Vengeance* out of a little rocking boat which had been drawn alongside. In another minute and with many a blustering oath which made my blood run cold, so did it mind me of the horrible day when I lay in the pirates' cave, a great, brutish-looking fellow came over the bulwark, with a pistol held between his teeth, followed by another, and now they came tumbling on the deck like cats, one after another in great confusion. And all this happened, in very truth, before we had the time to know it, for in one minute I had seen them clambering up the side and the next second they had come

pouring over the deck. But I misdoubt they had not expected an armed crew to receive them. There were ten of our ship's company there when the fellows came over the side for the others were still keeping watch lest another party of them try to board us from the starboard side. There were ten of those bloody buccaneers, as I afterward knew, so our numbers were equal at that time, though in truth, I gave no heed and knew naught of numbers then, only staring at this pack of wild, bloody, savage-looking cutthroats, each waving a cutlass, who were all about before me. If 'twas a victory to gain the deck of our vessel, why truly, they had e'en done that much and as quick as a sword thrust in the bargain. There was naught could come of their presence in this fashion save only a hand-to-hand battle with them and so it was. It was the kind of fighting the murderous rogues had the best stomach for, though in this case, 'twas clear to see that they were in much amaze to encoun-

ter it. As for me, the governor had given me a stout nay to this manner of fighting, and I must e'en obey him, having no cutlass. Feeling to see if my pistol should be safely lodged, I clambered down the fore-castle hatch, as the governor had bid me, but leaving the scuttle a little space open and staying on the upper rounds of the ladder within good sight and shot of them. And indeed, I had scarce reached my cover and turned my eyes back upon them when one of our own men fell bleeding with a great gash across his face. I e'en saw the murderous thief that did it and would fain have taken shot at him when lo, they were all mingled together in bloody combat, and to shoot at one of those dastardly enemies with such poor aim as my unpractised hand might have, would be in truth to lay our own company in danger. I could only watch the dreadful sight and hope some chance might come for me to do in the least way of it, one little hand's turn for my own fair repute. Sir Harrenden's men

had all a brave fashion with their swords and were as stout in combat as the shrewdest of the pirate crew. There was one fellow among those buccaneers who I made no doubt was the captain of their craft. He wore a red scarf knotted around his headpiece, tied on one side into a tight knot, and was the only fellow who had on any manner of garment above his waist, this being but a dirty, red coat without so much as a button to it, which haply might have sometime belonged to a British soldier. Him did I watch amid the clashing and bleeding and cursing, for verily he seemed to be everywhere at once. The fight waxed hot and the shrieking and reeling and falling of men and the running of blood turned me cold and sick to see. The little governor's sleeves were rolled up tight and his wrinkled brown face was set into such a firmness that in truth it might have been of iron. That shining sword of his gleamed first here and then there, and his thrusting and parrying with it were so

dextrous and sudden that I could not make shift to follow him, but only to marvel at the skill he showed. He went bounding from side to side amid showers of blows, jumping and dodging and thrusting, rushing forward, and ere many minutes had gone of that brave encounter, two of the dastardly villains had fallen under his whirling blade. Not a word said the little governor as he flew about, answering the oaths and curses of the bloody varlets only with his glittering sword. Amid all the blustering and yelling, he was ever silent, but the sweat dripped down the furrows of his wizened face and stood in great, shining drops upon his forehead. Not a man among the eight who were now fighting for their lives got behind him. Of a sudden another of the rascals dropped his sword and with a dreadful shriek and then a little gurgle, caught the bulwark, staggered, reeled, dragged himself across the deck, leaving a trail of blood behind him, and making one ghastly effort to raise himself

again, fell dead. Three of their number were now corpses on the deck and one of our own men—the one that I had seen fall—was breathing his last. Poor fellow, he had given his life to do a brave turn for the governor, for that and the love he bore Sir Harrenden were his only reasons for taking up this bloody, but righteous, enterprise.

But now Sir Harrenden and Master Hallet and the others, being convinced on't there would be no more boarding of the ship, came over and lent a hand, and soon our gay young noble was in the thick of it, disporting himself with as much skill and bravery as any of them there. 'Twas but a second, as I could see, that our governor paused to counsel the young knight in the best way of going about the business, but 'twas a second of life and death as I well knew. For rushing behind His Excellency just as he was about to parry a thrust in front of him, one of the rascals raised his cutlass, even in the ugly fashion I had seen

the black-bearded fellow do to the poor servant in the Salem woods. At this I raised the scuttle a little in trembling excitement, and praying God's forgiveness (for I was but a stripling) and e'en in that same breath imploring him to give my hand a sure aim, I shot my pistol straight at the sneaking varlet's black head. He dropped like a leaden weight to the deck as lifeless as the timbers on which his sprawling, bleeding body lay.

But now in the little space that followed hard after this surprise, for all of them looked in much amaze at the hatchway, did the red-coated fellow bespeak the governor, and all the rest waited, being, as I suppose, aweary of the affair, moreover somewhat of a doubt on the issue, seeing our number since Sir Harrenden and the others had joined the fighters.

"Odd's death," says the red-coated pirate, breathing heavy, "Ye'll be a goodly company."

"If ye be of a mind to use your tongue

a bit," says the governor, "belike ye'll need not yon cutlass and haply 'twere better to lay it aside. Ye'll know me of old, I doubt, Master Worley, and eke my little notion of laying down the swords in a truce."

"Cap'n Phipps," says the fellow, very cool, laying his cutlass aside of him and seating himself on a keg. "If thou'lt certify me of what is toward belike I'll be in a way of saying whether 'twould behoove me to engage in a hand's turn with thee here or to save the spilling of good English blood."

"Why marry, 'tis well asked," says the governor, "and thou hast a very fair tongue for a thief, methinks. It's my mind ye'll be thinking to come upon our old comrade, Master Low, hereabouts?"

By this time the five fellows who were left had gathered in a group somewhat apart, perching on the bulwarks, and some standing thereabouts, but all giving good ear to the discoursing.

"My lads," says the governor, bespeaking them, "it dwells in my mind ye be a little near to yon little boat below for my full comfort. Belike I can make shift to give a shrewder ear to our good Master Worley if thou'lt sit yonder—'tis a most comfortable place for resting."

They swaggered toward the mast, the governor keeping them ever in his sharp eye. For in truth, there was that in the governor's face, despite his soft way of bespeaking them, that I think not one of those rascally fellows would have dared so much as question his command. All of our own company stood near to the governor as he talked. I could see that several of them had ugly cuts and Sir Harrenden's arm was bleeding smartly, but not one of them would leave the spot.

"Why," says Master Worley, "there's no gainsaying that, nor our business neither, and I'll make free to confess we're laid somewhat in a blunder, supposing ye to be a very fair merchant prize. By's blood,

we'd ne'er a thought of meeting the royal governor; albeit if there's any information I can lay before the king's representative anent yon gentleman, I'll ask no better than to give it."

By this time I had come forth from the hatch and stood close to His Excellency. And then indeed did I marvel much at the quiet manner of our governor with this vile wretch who would not e'en stand by his honor in the compact he had made with the pirate, Low, but now, being somewhat afeard for his own skin, must needs seek to bewray his comrade to the king's governor, that so he might save his own life. His Excellency waited a bit, and I could see that he was all hot with anger within, though his voice was calm enough as he said, very slow,

"Master Worley, ye have a halter about your thievish neck. Ye be but a miserable rogue in my way of it. Ye have not the wit of Ned Low, and ye'll never fly a black flag to your own craft. Ye have none of a

chief's blood in your foul veins and ne'er a brain to vouchsafe ye a shrewd thought. Ye be a weak and blustering marplot and ye'll have the cock-a-hoop face to discourse with me on 'good English blood.' Ye're a deserter from His Majesty's troops and ye'll flaunt the uniform ye've laid in disgrace e'en before my two eyes. And now ye'll seek to be certified if I'll give ye a parole after this or whether ye must fight for your worthless life. Now hark ye, varlet, to one that hath, forsooth, a drop or two of the good English blood. Thou'lt purchase no parole from William Phipps with your dastardly treachery. There be not enough of ye to fight and yon gallant crew of thine have ne'er a stomach for it, 'tis easy to discover. Ye be all prisoners aboard this craft. In the fairest way of it, 'twill be my duty to hang ye in Boston. Yet no man e'ersought a fight with William Phipps and got a nay for an answer. And so if ye'll choose to die in your blood, fighting for your poor, forfeit life, why, look ye,

here's the sword ye scampered from on the
Algier Rose off Tortuga, and it'll ask no
better than a hand's turn with ye if ye be
so minded !”

CHARTER XIV.

IN WHICH WE USE OUR WITS INSTEAD OF WEAPONS.

'Twas a merciful choice the governor gave him and the fellow came bounding forward with the anger of a wounded beast. For, belike, he opined that if he could but carry it with victory, there would be yet a chance for him and his knavish crew, seeing how they might then have but our company to deal with, bereft of a leader. For I doubt he held that 'twas naught but the little governor's stout heart that was keeping the blood a-going through the veins of all our crew. Their weapons clashed and I watched the combat with a thumping heart. The thievish Worley's blade played ever dangerously near the little governor, but, I minded how His Excellency had ever a little smile playing

about his mouth, as he parried the thrusts. The desperate, blustering fellow roared with anger while he was at it, as if, forsooth, the oaths might avail him in the stead of practised skill. But his yelling and stamping and desperate swinging of his ugly weapon only shocked the air, for the little governor stood silent and smiling, and his polished blade gleamed here and there as it dextrously 'scaped every curse-driven stroke. At the last of it the sneakish varlet, seeing how his blustering and swinging served him for naught, of a sudden, drew forth a pistol, aiming it full in His Excellency's face, but with a quick gleam, the governor's sword dashed the weapon from the cowardly villain's hand, and in less than a breath more it was buried in the pirate's throat. He went down all in a heap, for even ere he fell his dastardly career was over. A little afterward, when the time was more favorable for discoursing, His Excellency told us anent the fellow's vile career; how he had sometime

been in the royal service, and being aboard a vessel overhauled by Master Low, had joined that notable rover, having ne'er a stomach for fighting against him. In sad earnest, if the good Lord seeth any choice among those black-souled pirates, it be-seemed me this fellow would be verily a blacker scoundrel than most of them in his eyes. But, I misdoubt me a pirate's chances for his soul's salvation would be mighty small in any way of it.

It needs not to make any narrative of what befell after that victory over Master Low's traitorous partner. The five fellows, being searched and all unarmed, were bestowed in the hold of the *Vengeance* to ponder on their wickedness. When the fog cleared, which was the next afternoon, we boarded our nightly neighbor, the governor adventuring 'twas now our turn for an overhauling. She turned out to be a sloop named the *Vulture*—a long, low craft carrying no guns and in such disorder that truly any housewife in the colony might have come

by a reprimand of the General Court for having her kitchen as much bedraggled. Her boom had been split and mended overmuch, and her sails with their many crazy patches were truly the dirtiest I had ever set my two eyes on. Moreover, I doubt her deck had never come by a swabbing from the look of it. She flew no colors, but the black flag with its ugly white skeleton grinning from it was aboard, ready for flaunting forth after a victorious overhauling, as is the custom with those men. In her cabin were a mort of boxes filled with silver plate and much loose coin of different nations, though mostly, as the governor said, of the Spanish, and a mort of other goods which we doubted not the thieves had come by on their voyage thither.

There was one thing about that crazy, dirty craft that the governor took special note on, calling on us to look well upon it as he and I and Master Hallet rowed back to the *Vengeance* after our looking of it

over. 'Twas a place on her hull toward the bows where a damage had been repaired, but was not painted to match the rest of her. It helped to set her apart from other craft and make her easy to discover at a distance, e'en to one who might not make shift to tell her by her rigging.

I will not weary you with narrating the governor's plan, for the carrying of it out will bring it to your wits clear enow. There were twenty-three men to our company (if I make bold to call myself a man who was in truth naught but a stripling) counting the five fellows in the hold. These five fellows who deported themselves not at all forward, seeing mayhap a chance of pardon in a willing compliance, did the governor take on the *Vulture*, besides myself and seven of our own sturdy men; for I doubt he was never full at ease an' the pirates were not under his own eye. They had no weapons of any sort and were made to work the ship under His Excellency's orders, which they did after a skil-

ful manner. So, with a ship's company of fourteen, though withal, five of these were no more than prisoners and slaves aboard her, albeit treated with much decency, did we raise anchor and, shaking out our sails, put merrily forth in a fair wind for our next adventure. Captain Hallet, being now again supreme on his own beloved *Vengeance*, save for young Sir Harrenden, sailed after us with the remnant of our stalwart crew. The clean, white-sailed brig soon passed us in a very pretty fashion, Sir Harrenden, with his poor, wounded arm in a sling, standing at her rail, laughing stoutly at the little governor and jeering anent His Excellency's crazy bark. The governor, being ever ready with his jibe, took the horn and called out lustily that there was a very fair store of Rhenish wine aboard the sloop which he'd like mightily for Sir Harrenden to taste, but hoped he might make shift to find a cask of tea on his good spinster, *Vengeance*, if forsooth he become thirsty, and he e'en jibed Sir.

Harrenden moreover on his being too queasy to come aboard our dirty pirate craft. Though, in sad truth, there was good cause for our young gentleman to remain on his own vessel, his injuries needing an overlooking now and again, and Master Hallet being somewhat of a surgeon, and in truth, the only one of all our company who owned any skill in medical lore. As for me, I missed Sir Harrenden sorely on our deck, though the two vessels were ever within hailing, and I could see him oft. His wits seemed ever contriving some fresh jibe anent the royal governor, for, in very truth, he beseemed not to have a whit of fear for His Excellency's high position.

We sailed very easily up the cape, examining every little cove and inlet and rocky island for "nests" as the governor shrewdly called them. Putting into Gloucester Harbor we looked closely on all the little islets of the haven, discoursing with the fisher folk and then put northward for

Thatcher's Island, which, as I told you—and forsooth as most of you know—lies off the easternmost end of Cape Ann. 'Twas not long after we rounded Eastern Point that the island's western headland came into view—a mighty cliff of ugly gray earth rearing its head brazenly out of the sea like a savage monster. The island owned about eighty acres to its size, and lay in fair sight of the mainland. Its frowning rocks ever dashed with foam, its ugly, barren land spotted with boulders and little, scanty patches of grass, in truth affected me queerly, for it beseemed 'twas some soulless thing, bleak and savage and without mercy, and my prankish wits held it to be some wicked accomplice of the cruel ocean—a little piece of land that whilom might have strayed from the righteous earth hard by and sold itself to the wicked sea, even as our good townspeople were reputed to be selling themselves unto Satan. And moreover as our vessels made slowly and with much caution toward the

perilous shore, I minded me of the woful shipwreck and sufferings of Goodman Thatcher hereabouts in the year 1635, which was told in Dr. Increase Mather's "Remarkable Providences" that I had often pondered over in my father's study of a Sabbath Day. The place was sometimes called Thatcher's Woe, it being the name he gave it when he was cast upon its rocks with all of his party on their voyage from Ipswich. Of a truth here was the very place for wicked men to lay to, a port fit indeed for the devil, and of a sort with every black and murderous plot. Not so much as a flower was there on it, and no sign of God's goodness or mercy. Certes, it beseemed a place kept apart for whoso would defy his just laws and set their doomed souls against all things good.

'Twas the fifth day of our cruising; the sun was just taking the last gleam of light off the western headland and over many gulls were circling about it as we cast our anchors nigh two miles to the south of the

island. Atween our vessels and that desolate shore, and nestling under the southernmost point, there lay a tiny spot of low land like a little piece of the island broken off, and beyond this, as the day's light died away, could we make out the topmost rigging of two ships. It beseeemed like unto four masts sticking out of the dry land, but we made no doubts that we had at last set our eyes upon the *Infernal Majesty* and the truant *Sea Maid*. The governor studied them very shrewdly through his glass, with Master Hallet, who had come aboard with Sir Harrenden, but even as they discoursed anent it, trying to certify themselves from the distant rigging, the grayish light of the closing day died away apace, the island was shortly wrapped in dark and all that we could make shift to see were the four black masts rising up like shadowy spectres in ghostly league, and I fancied that the wailing sound I heard in their direction was e'en their calling unto lost souls to hasten thither for some

witch meeting—though of a solemn truth, I well knew it to be naught but the shrieking of the wild birds as they circled over the lonely cliff.

Ere midnight we hoisted our anchors and went slowly northward till we came abreast of the channel which separated Master Thatcher's island from the little islet to the south. Here again did we cast anchor as close together as might be, and Sir Harrenden with Master Hallet coming again aboard the *Vulture*, we four bestowed ourselves in very pleasant ceremony in the cabin where I hearkened to their plans for the morrow with as eager a heart as e'er a stripling wore, I'll warrant.

I had never seen His Excellency in such gay mood as that night when we sate together in the dirty cabin of the *Vulture*, his polished sword laid on the table nigh him, and his pleasant, brown face ever screwed up in laughter at the strange case he was in, being forsooth commander of a pirate sloop, as Sir Harrenden said.

"Beshrew me," says His Excellency, "we've put ourselves in very favorable position for their sighting, and it needs but the light of morn to show Master Low his own sloop come to lend him a hand's turn, and with a goodly prize withal as a peace token for her tardiness. Ye'll understand, Sir Harrenden, that from this time forth thy precious *Vengeance* is naught but a captured craft which we overhauled off Boston."

"Aye, aye, sir," says Sir Harrenden, "and I'm of a mind that thou'dst make a very fair pirate if thou wert to try thy hand at it in good sooth."

"Why, gramercy!" said the governor, "an' if I were even so I'd have ye to walk the plank for a brazen, strutting fashion monger!"

And so they would have after each other with their tongues, causing Master Hallet and me to laugh mightily until the governor, bethinking himself, gave over, enjoining upon us that 'twas late, and that if we

were to make shift to play the cat instead of the lion, to borrow the pirates' manner of speaking, why then was it high time to stand about. So he despatched a sailor to summon before him the five fellows of Master Worley's crew.

"My lads," said he to them when they were before him, "I have marked how that ye have comported yourselves with very fair decorum and e'en showed forth some worthy skill in our little voyage hither. And I am minded to speak out my thoughts to thee and lay them to your consideration. There is ne'er one of ye with the wit to become a pirate chief, though I'm far from laying that against ye. Moreover, I trow ye've no stomach for a sermon. Mayhap 'tis a grand station to be a pirate king, but it's aye another matter to be a pirate sailor, for if your chief hath the wit to cheat honest merchant folk, ye may lay to it that he hath both the wit and the power to cheat his own men, and that his doing it at the end on't is as certain as the king's

taxes. I'll adventure that most of ye began as honest sailors. I began my life before the mast, and have come by a very favorable moiety of worldly goods by honest practises. 'Tis but a rocky road from the fo'c's'le to the gallows, mates, and 'tis the gallows I'll warrant ye is waiting for every pirate who hath not a wit like to the devil's, and e'en such as have stand in much danger, as ye'll see from yon crafts. Now, my lads, I've a little emprise toward for taking yon Master Low without any bloodshed, and if ye've a mind for a hand's turn in the righteous cause, I'll bestow that same in my mind to your favor. I'm in a way of thinking that with Master Low's carcass dangling in a public place and Master Worley's soul resting with the devil and none of the rest of ye with the wit for a thievish cruise on your own account, why, the good Lord may haply do a little conjuring to turn your heads to things that are honest—and safe. Now,

which of ye'll give me Master Low's signal?"

I could see that the fellows all stood up as if forsooth they had shed all their evil deeds while the governor spake, and says one of them: "'Tis two stout blasts and a space and then two more, and he'll know from that token e'en in the dark that 'tis the *Vulture* hails him."

The first sign of morning was now come, but it was still too dark for Sir Edward Low to see us from his vessels. Giving me the horn His Excellency counselled me to go upon the deck and blow forth our putting in to the *Infernal Majesty*. With a gay heart, I looked out into the channel where the two ships lay, their hulls just to be seen in the departing night. And through that watery hallway, I could see, far beyond and high above the ocean, a little, twinkling, hazy light, somewhat weakened in its lustre by the first glimmer of the morning, belike the remnant of

some Indian campfire on the jagged cliffs of Cape Ann. Somewhat my hand trembled as I brought the trumpet to my lips and blew two sounding blasts which echoed back to me even as I blew the other two. I had not long to wait ere I heard two brave blasts afar and then two more, and I knew that we were answered.

"Belike," says the governor, "they'd have us to put into yon little nook, and we'll have to send them a polite nay to it by staying where we are."

But when the morning was fully come and it was quite light, we made out two small boats putting forth from the *Infernal Majesty*. There was not so much as a breath of wind, and, belike, Sir Edward Low could ne'er rest his greedy soul in patience, but must e'en come out in this fashion for a glimpse of the pretty prize his sloop had lately taken. At the sight of this putting forth, the governor ordered every man to take himself into the cabin, where our whole company of twenty-one

(all but two of the crew of the *Vengeance* having joined us during the night) bestowed themselves according to his bidding. We were all armed, except the five pirate fellows, with pistols and cutlasses (the governor e'en giving over to my pleading for a free hand in it), but these were only by way of a shrewd precaution, the governor saying that we were to use naught but our wits for weapons unless we should be hard put to it. There was but small danger of the approaching pirates boarding Sir Harrenden's brig, for she lay beyond us more to seaward, and we were well in the path of the two shallops. But the governor counselled one of the five fellows to go upon the deck wearing all his pirate trappings, though more notably a reddish scarf about his neck, which was a common fashion with all such. For the governor held that the sight of one of his own band pacing the deck of his own sloop would be a very plausible sign to Master Low that his men were thereon. But the fellow

was watched with a very faithful care, I'll warrant you, for any signs or signals he might yet bestow upon his whilom master by way of warning. When the two boats were come nigh enough so that he must have made out their people, His Excellency had the fellow down into the cabin and catechised him on the number of gentlemen we must entertain. The sometime pirate was grown very biddable, bearing himself with a humble carriage, and I opined that he would make a good accounting to us in the matter of loyalty, as forsooth he had already done before the mast.

"Ye know them all?" asked the governor.

"Aye," says the knave, "there be Cap'n Low and eight of the *Majesty's* company whom I did hail."

"Gramercy, 'tis well spoken," says His Excellency, "and they'll be in fighting gear, I doubt!"

"Struth, I make it not so," says the fellow. "Belike, he thinks it needs no war

toggery in such an emprise; in the best way of it there be no cutlasses that I can spy."

"Why, then, 'tis as comfortable a meeting as we might wish," says the governor, "and Master Low's greed hath over-reached him."

Then His Excellency, removing his head gear, went up the steps, and gazed very cautiously out of the hatch, for to tell truth, he was of no mind to trust the fellow over-much. He came again with much suddenness, and I knew from the look of his countenance that he was mightily pleased. Going straight to the small table in the middle of the cabin, he bethought himself in silence for a space and then he gave a quick glance about on all of us. We were twenty-one, as I told you, two of our men being still aboard the *Vengeance*, and each of us had a cutlass and pistol, except the five fellows, though I marvelled somewhat on the use Sir Harrenden might make of his weapons, seeing that his right arm was

in a sling and useless. So there were fifteen armed and able-bodied men in the cabin in the best way of reckoning, albeit I was no man.

His Excellency looked hard upon the five erstwhile pirates and says he,

"My good lads, it irks me somewhat that I cannot arm ye in this emprise, for I doubt your pondering has set your consciences a virtuous course, but I must e'en ask you to betake yourselves after Captain Hallet for a brief space, and so be out of temptation." At this, Captain Hallet led the fellows away and His Excellency beckoned several others of our people to accompany them. The five scapegraces went as meek as sheep to the slaughter, and I knew they were to be lodged again in the hold. I was somewhat sorry to see it, but could not gainsay the governor's shrewdness. When Master Hallet and the others came again, the governor addressed us.

"Mates," says he, "I'm somewhat of a mind that the horn signal and the sight of

our pretty sloop hath lured the rascals hither but half armed. If, in truth, Sir Edward hath let his greed and haste lay him in such a blunder, we'll profit thereby. The varlet, to my knowing, hath never lost a vessel by capture and mayhap his assurance exceedeth his caution. But I can make out no swords yonder from a quick glance. In any way of it, there are but nine men rowing hither armed or unarmed, and we are fifteen. Ye'll allow that no brave Englishman asks more than an equal portion in numbers. It needs not to tell you that yon Low bears a many murders on his black soul, and 'tis him we must, if needs be, set our wits to catching. But I would fain take him back alive, if that may be, for his ending to be made an ensample to others and somewhat of a reminder to the merchants of Boston in a matter touching our commerce and trading."

What more he would have spoken I know not for at that moment we heard the sound of voices above mingled with a

scrambling noise and then the tread of feet upon the deck.

"They've boarded us!" cried Sir Harrenden, but the governor conjured him to silence, drawing his sword and laying it before him on the table, which he sat behind like unto a judge. Then he laid his head gear down alongside his sword, and cocked his pistol, which he kept in his hand. As he sate there behind the table with his eyes before him on the door, I was somewhat minded of the day I first set eyes upon him in the Government House, discoursing with my father and the Boston worthies, but it came to me that he had a stouter relish for his sword and pistol than for his official pen, and no man could make bold to chide him with small knowledge here as Mr. Mather had done with such an uppish carriage in the Council Chamber.

There was a rushing about on the deck above, some hasty discoursing that I could not well make out, some strange and blustering oaths, and in the midst of it all a

gruff, commanding voice, ordering with much anger. Then was there a heavy foot-fall on the stairs, someone came hurrying half-way down, stopped short, and called back to one above.

"Nay, fool," said the voice, with a horrible oath, "in the likeliest fashion the rum's been overhauling them and their wits be capsized!"

That was all it spake but 'twas the roughest voice my two ears have ever heard—a voice with no mercy in it. But I had no time to ponder on't, for in the space of a second, the cabin door flew open and a great, hulking, ugly fellow in a dirty blue coat with white stripes to it, burst in, banged the door shut after him, glanced quickly about, started, rubbed his two eyes, looked again, uttered a dreadful curse, and sank back against the door aghast. He was just reaching for the handle to open it again, when the little governor's voice rang out, clear and firm.

"Up with thy hands, my man!"



"UP WITH THY HANDS, MY MAN!"

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**ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS**

R

L

The great fellow's hands twitched.

"Hoist sail!" roared the governor. "We'll have no parleying!" The fellow's hands were up ere the words were spoken. The governor made a sign to Master Hallet, who brought forth from the fellow's belt a great pistol and laid it on the table before the governor. 'Twas the only weapon the man carried. I had a very fair chance to study him now, and I made no doubt of his being, in very truth, the famous buccaneer. His hair was long and black, his frame was like to that of a bull, he had a heavy, slouching way with him, and two of his fingers were gone. His little, black eyes were half closed and sent forth darts of hate and cruelty as they looked about all amazed and angry. In truth, I was afeard of him even then, so wicked and dreadful did he seem. But the little governor was calm, with his keen wit ever at his service. He held his pistol well in the rascal's sight as he spake.

"Master Edward Low," says he, "thou'st

struck upon a reef." But even as he said it, there was the sound of feet upon the steps and the other eight fellows, some of whom I knew well and had suffered much thereby, came rushing in. They needed but the one glimpse of us to see how the wind set. One of them whipped out a pistol and was about to lift it when Master Hallet shot him dead. Every one of those nine pirates had more than one pair of eyes watching him, but as we found afterwards, only four of them had even pistols about them. If Master Low had any doubts about his course, they left him, I trow, as the fellow of his crew went reeling to the floor.

It needs not to tell you how he spake of the governor's being laid in a great error, how he had, in truth, changed his profession sith His Excellency had known of him before, how he was now engaged in worthy commercial enterprise, how he had been waiting for the sloop to join him in some cock-a-hoop emprise touching a voy-

age to Halifax, how the *Maid* had been found drifting without a soul to man her, and much other lying not in any way plausible. We knew right well the fellow's sneakish, murderous eyes had been ever on the galleon treasure, which he had coveted sith its raising, and the governor vouchsafed no answer to the fellow's discourse, only ordering him and his seven fellows taken into the hold. Here they were bestowed and 'twas verily the last I ever saw of Sir Edward Low, my whole knowledge of him covering only the space of a few small minutes, albeit my whole life of late had been filled with the matter of his catching. But the little sight I had of the famous fellow, his godless look and shrewd eye, is ever with me, and will e'en stay in my memory while I live like one other sight that you are yet to hear about.

So I will not recount the details of our tarrying thereabouts, seeing that the purpose of our emprise was accomplished. We found the *Sea Maid* very much the

worse for his godless usage, filled with rum bottles and playing cards, and makeshift wooden cannons withal, at which we had a stout laugh; but we came by no sign of Master Seaver and his crew. Belike they had all been murdered or marooned in the wicked fashion of those pirates. 'Twas many years after there came a ship into Boston Harbor with one Master Elting for master, and 'twas whispered about on his being seen shoreward, that he was, in truth, Master Seaver of the old *Sea Maid*. But there was no good evidence that any could find to sustain the gossip, and 'twas thought on no more.

The five fellows of Master Worley's crew, having come somewhat in His Excellency's favorable regard, and being new in the pirates' profession, for the most part, were suffered to go their ways, and walked in righteousness or sin thenceforth, I suppose, according to their pleasures, for I never came by sight of them more. They were put ashore on the lonely coast of

Cape Ann with some landsmen's trappings, two of them making for Gloucester, one for Newbury and the other two for Ipswich, that so their number on arriving might not cause any gossiping and lead to suspicion.

As we came nigh to the two pirate vessels, two fellows put off in a little jolly-boat toward the mainland, and one of these I saw to be the black-bearded fellow who had murdered the indentured servant in the Salem woods. They were well beyond pistol shot and so made good their escape and we never came by any knowledge of them. His Excellency opined that the black-bearded fellow, whom he knew somewhat of, was the only one of all Master Low's band with the wit to put forth on his own account as a sea-robber.

We were four days at the island, overhauling the *Maid* as well as might be. The *Infernal Majesty* and the sloop were both scuttled on His Excellency's orders, both being old and leaking craft, and we

put forth with the *Maid* and the *Vengeance* on our voyage back to Boston town. The eight pirates, Low and his old guard, as the governor called them, were bestowed aboard the *Sea Maid*, which the governor captained, taking with him the better portion of our company. Master Hallet, Sir Harrenden and myself, bestowed ourselves aboard the *Vengeance* with the rest of our people and so we set out. But before nightfall we came up with an incoming vessel which had bespoke the *Nymph* somewhat out to seaward, and making a slow passage of it on account of being somewhat crippled by a heavy storm she had run into, yet not enough to require any aid of the other ship. And so the governor, being now in a fever of impatience to lay his hands upon the treasure, must needs turn about and put to sea again to meet his treasure ship, leaving us to go back to Boston alone and carry tidings of our adventure.

CHAPTER XV.

IN WHICH MISERY HAS COMPANY.

WHEN we landed at Scarlet's Wharf, we made our way straight for the Government House, for I had told Sir Harrenden that I must see my sister before attending to any other matters, and also convey His Excellency's messages to my Lady Phipps. And Sir Harrenden offered to accompany me thither, saying very soberly that he was likewise much desirous of seeing Lady Phipps, himself, which caused me to smile somewhat, guessing the real cause of it.

We were truly a matter of much concern and gossip to most of those we passed coming through the highway known as Cornhill, the more so I doubt me as Sir Harrenden bore his arm in a sling, and moreover the whole town knew what we

had been about. Some asked what fortune had befallen us, desiring to know where was His Excellency tarrying, but I was in such haste and Sir Harrenden in such a high distemper with all the Boston worthies on account of their disfavor of the governor's bold going, that in truth he showed it to every dame and urchin who questioned us, saying the citizens were a pack of muddle-brained lubbers with their superstitions. But as we came along there were not over many about and those that were abroad were clustered together in little groups for the most part, of twos or threes, conversing in whispers, and one or two looked askance at me, though for what reason I knew not then, but it came to me thereafter. We stopped and spake with one merchant, whom Sir Harrenden knew well, who told us that the General Court was holding session at Salem. He desired to know if I were Master Determined Corwin, and upon hearing from Sir Harrenden that I was, he looked hard at me and seemed to be at the

point of speaking further, but then be-
thought him not to do so, and so bidding
us a fair good-day, he passed on, yet not
without a strange look at me as he did so.

I had gone through so many adventures
by this time that my heart, which I'll make
bold to say, was never a coward's one, had
come to beat full steady e'en in face of
dangers and bloodshed, and I was afeared
of naught, but I will confess that, as we
came toward the Government House on
that day, a strange terror came upon me as
of some evil thing hanging over me, so that
I could not converse with any ease, but
trembled strangely. For whatever I might
say, the thought of the merchant we had
met was ever upon me and his strange look,
which seemed to have some queer meaning
in it, haunted me as I went along trying to
keep pace with Sir Harrenden's long strides,
he being a taller one than I.

When, at last, we reached the Govern-
ment House, the servant who came to the
door, started aback at sight of us. We

asked for my Lady Phipps first on account of that being the right way of it, but I doubt we were both thinking more on my dear sister. The servant led us in and told us that Lady Phipps was gone to tarry with some friends in New York during the governor's absence, being much besought of them thereto.

"Stayeth she long there?" Sir Harrenden inquired.

"Till the witchcrafts be over, or until the governor's return."

"And my sister, Mercy?" says I. "Be-like she hath gone too."

The servant said nothing to this, seeming as if she would not hear, but took us into the council room where Sir Harrenden sat himself down in the governor's big chair, and I in another, feeling very strange. Then the servant left us, and in a minute came again bringing a letter which she handed to me. I tore it open, and this is how it read, for I have kept that letter to this day and I will not tell you how many times I have

IN WHICH MISERY HAS COMPANY. 241

read it through since then, and thought on that unhappy time :

MY DEAR AND ONLY BROTHER, DETERMINED,

When you receive this missive, if mayhap, God willeth that it come into your hands while I am still living, thou'lt know that I am in the Salem Jail, under sentence of death for witchcraft. If thou hast heard already of our dear father's death, I pray you to know that he was brought unto it by the tidings of my wickedness and not by aught of thine adventures, as thou mayest think in thy generous heart. In truth, I have no knowledge of meaning any evil to any that live, nor of any covenant with Satan, such as they say that I have made, but the good ministers are wise beyond a poor maid's learning, seeing sin where my worldly eyes may e'en not discover it, and it sits not well upon me to question their righteousness. It may well be, brother, that I have not comported myself with due humility and meekness in this evil time, in the eyes of them that see into our souls. But you will believe me, I doubt not, that I have ever meant to live as befits a maid, praying much and doing my spinning with a willing heart. They have conjured me to confess my evil covenant with Satan, but I cannot speak lyingly on't, and thou'lt believe me, my

brother, that in this I am not setting myself stubbornly against the magistrates, but that in my heart I know not how I have offended, save by thinking somewhat overmuch of temporal things, which I have and do confess. For I am minded now how I have coveted fineries wherewith to adorn myself and set my thoughts somewhat on worldly happiness. Dost think that I am over sinful in this, my dear brother? If thou dost, then give me thy prayers, I pray thee, for my sin of presumption, fearing to die in iniquity. For oh, Determined, I can see the pit opening before my very eyes and God's wrath smite me, and it is awful to endure. And, Determined, thou'lt tell Sir Harrenden Orkney of it, and beseech him not to chide himself with setting my thoughts to worldly things, for he is of a righteous heart and worthy of a shrewder lass, for in truth, my learning be'st but small, as thou knowest.

I must now bid thee a last good-by, my dear, dear brother, and conjure thee not to think of thy dear sister as brazen in seeing no worldly confession to make save what I have told thee. Mayhap, there may be some mercy which even the good ministers wot not of, and I will set my heart on that, praying fervently and purifying myself as best I can, until the moment comes for me to answer to the law, with those others who are also

IN WHICH MISERY HAS COMPANY. 243

appointed to die, which I hope I may do bravely so that thou mayest know thy sister is no coward, seeing thy own brave heart in the face of dangers.

Thy sister,

MERCY.

I dropped the letter from my hands when I had finished the reading, having no word to say, but looking at Sir Harrenden, who was staring at me with a blank look, seeing how distraught I was and guessing that the letter bore bad tidings of my sister. And, seeing I said naught, he made bold to pick the letter up from the floor where it had fallen, and read it through to the end, and then he sat drumming with his fingers on the council table, after a nervous fashion he had, but never a word spake either one of us for full a minute. Then, setting my face tight so that I might speak without weeping, and, getting up from my chair, I said,

“I am going to see Mr. Cotton Mather.” For, in my extremity of grief and anger for my sister’s sad condition, I had yet no word

to say of my poor father's death, though that should have been grief enough to me, only that it was overshadowed by the greater sorrow.

"Belike he'll be in Salem; give o'er to that thought and have thy seat and be calm, my lad. They can do naught without the governor's signing and warrant; knowest thou not that? We'll go down to Salem on the coach."

"They will hang my sister!" says I, shrieking it aloud and falling into my chair again.

"Thy dear sister's safety is as near to my heart as it is to thine, boy. But we cannot save her with weeping and quarrelling with the ministers. His Excellency will be here in a day or two at most. Come now, we'll to the Province Arms for seats on the next coach."

I saw how strong he was in a calamity, even as he had been brave to face danger and death, keeping his wits ever about him as my poor, muddled brain could

never do, so I gave over to his advice as meekly as a maid, and we started for the tavern together.

There were a mort of people going to Salem to witness the trials and the coach was crowded with such. I think I have never looked on such excitement about the coaching station as on that day. Some had a very deep concern upon them, as I could see from their countenances, but the most, it seemed, were only going to have sight of the condemned and how they comported themselves. But I had no mind to discourse with any of the passengers, only thinking of my dear sister, and I sat silent hardly heeding their talk.

I can very well remember how my feelings were so much overwrought as I sate on the coach that my poor wits began to take note of little things, wandering back into the past and looking aimless here and there, all confused like a lost child. I wondered if Sir Edward Low were in truth a baronet, or whether it was only the gov-

ernor's jibing fashion to call him so. I wondered what the new king looked like and how the poor coward, James, who had fled the throne, was disporting himself in France. Then, was I brought back, of a sudden, to my sad senses, and my sore plight by the coach all at once stopping at the tavern in the town of Lynn.

There was a messenger just arrived by horse from Salem, bringing tidings of the transactions there, and a great crowd of men and women were clustering about him for the news.

"There were five, I tell ye—five, five, five! Dost hear that?" he yelled, and I made out from other things that were said that he meant five of the condemned had been hung in the morning at sunrise.

"Will any be taken to Gallows Hill to-morrow?" asked one.

"Nay," said the messenger, "but belike the next day."

"Is Goody Nurse hanged?" called a woman.

"Aye, and her furniture taken by the sheriff, and her grandchildren turned out. Mr. Sewall, in his sentence, named her house a nest of witches. Those to-day were Goodman Jacobs and the Ott woman, who was caught with the spider. 'Twas a strange case. And young Calen and his wife, though some of the jury were of a mind to let them off with a whipping, seeing the small evidence against them, but Mr. Mather demanded the execution with eloquent pleading, citing much learned matter, and the Judges ordered the jury so."

"And what other one, my lad?" called Sir Harrenden, from the coach. "Thou hast named but four, methinks."

"Oh, a meek-mannered wench; I know her not. There was no comment on her case, though some pity."

"Drive on," called one.

"Are all within?" asked the driver.

"Aye, and hanging without like hornets. Drive on!"

And with much of pushing and crowd-

ing and yelling, and some weeping and wringing of hands, and a mort of such like excitement, the coach went rattling along the Salem road.

I put my shaking hand on Sir Harrenden's arm—the one that hung in the sling—saying,

"That was my sister Mercy that he called a meek-mannered wench; did'st hear him, Sir Harrenden?"

"A magistrate's daughter, forsooth, and no comments made!" says he, angrily, for I suppose his grief at my sister's case was e'en as great as mine own, as he said, though he showed it in a different manner, and it made him wroth at my stupidity. "Nay, boy, have thy wits about thee, and take not so much council of thy fears!"

"But they're hanging them without the governor's signing the warrants; did'st mark that, Sir Harrenden? They are doing it on their own consciences, mark ye!"

"Belike 'twill be on their own heads, if it be so," says he, "but they'd never dare in the case of such an one as thy father's

child, so bide thy fears. See all those houses closed tight and I'll warrant me their owners standing without with guns to defy the officers! So the Salem men are not all bestead of this witchcraft distemper, methinks, and they'll have not their wives and children wrenched from them; see there!"

In truth, 'twas a fine sight to see here and there, as we approached my poor village, how some of the goodmen of Salem were stationed on their doorsteps with shot-guns, but this was not so with most of the citizens, who only lived from hour to hour, in terror, as I soon knew, darkening up their houses as they should be gone hence, for what little such a trick might avail. The streets were full of tithing-men and sheriffs; the meeting-houses were all opened for prayer, and the flag on the custom house was at half-mast. The coach made station at the Green Crow Tavern, kept by one Master Berry, where there was a great crowd and much embracing and asking of

questions, as we alighted. And truly had I never seen my own town in such a state before, nor, withal, since then, nor ever will. As we came by the Court House there was a crowd of full a thousand men and women, aye, and children too, trying to push into the doorway. And there were bits of paper all about, and signs and proclamations setting forth the business of the court, on a large panel aside the great door. There was a tithing-man strutting up and down in the doorway and sometimes standing on the steps and calling,

“Hear ye, hear ye! All ye goodmen of the colony and loyal subjects of the Crown! The General Court of the new Province of the Massachusetts Bay is now in session. All ye having evidence of witchcraft or reason for suspecting any, can lay thy cause before their Worshipful Honors, who will take heed to such grievances in their proper order. God save the Worshipful Judges of our beloved province!”

And I knew as I gave ear to this that

the renowned Mr. Sewall, with his velvet cap—the same that my poor, dead father had taken my sister and me to for protection—was presiding therein in much state and had e'en passed judgment on her when she was unbefriended.

We tarried there only long enough to inquire if Mr. Mather was in Salem at which an official made answer that he was within, but now the chance was nigh, I was of no mind to see him, being fearful of my own anger; nor still was I anxious to see the pitiful things that I knew were happening before the court. My only thought was to see and comfort my dear sister in her prison, if that might be, and I knew that Sir Harrenden was of the same mind. So we made our way to the jail. As we came upon it, I minded me how I had clomb up over that great door, not so very long ago, making out that I was the devil himself, and little thinking how I should come to it again on a sadder errand.

When we came upon the official stand-

ing before the door, Sir Harrenden asked if we might see a prisoner lodged there, being her friends and kin.

"The wretches lodged within have no friends nor kin but Satan, and thou mayest not see them; that is the order," said the man.

"By what means may we secure the privilege, then?" asked Sir Harrenden.

But the jailor said that there was no such privilege granted for it. Then did I wax hot with anger, cursing him and all his set, crying to see my sister, but he was not unkindly about it, only resolute to do as he was ordered. But he told us we might gain a privilege, if the judges were comfortable to it, to see my sister on the scaffold and say her a last farewell. So I resolved to write a letter to Judge Sewall in this wise, and Sir Harrenden being favorable to it, we walked along, both very dejected, for I doubted he was losing heart, at last, though he said not so. We went to my father's house, where the shutters

were all tight, and no sign of life was about the place. But on my banging at the knocker, our old colored servant came to the door, crying, "Oh, Master Determined," when she saw me, and seeming much relieved at my presence. It was no time to tell her of my adventures, but I questioned her of my father's death which came very sudden from a shock, as Dr. Hale called it, and sith then she had lived in the house alone, waiting for my dear sister and me to come back, until Mercy had been brought to Salem for trial and then appointed to die, when she had only the one hope left to see me back in the house again as its master.

Our old walls had seen overmuch sadness, for within them my dear mother had died blessing Mercy and me, and now I came to it thinking of my father's deep concern therein and my sister being gone from it forever. As we went through the old rooms, all of the things therein seemed to tell me some story of my sweet sister

and to have some connection with her life, so that when we came into her own room, with the spinning wheel and flax as they had been when she left them to go to Boston, and all the little trinkets that had set so nigh her heart, I could set no longer a manly face against my affliction, but fell on the bed crying aloud with Sir Harrenden nigh to me, standing my grief and his own with as much noble strength and manliness as might be, but making a poor shift of it withal.

CHAPTER XVI.

IN WHICH I BID YOU FAREWELL.

THROUGH all these years of my life there is no time that stands so clear in my memory as those dark, sad days I passed at my poor father's house in Salem, with Sir Harrenden Orkney, waiting for the fearful day to come when my dear sister must answer to the law, which was like unto a scythe in the hands of some heedless farmer, cutting down the flowers as well as the weeds, and filling our good province with anguish and sorrow.

As I try to tell you of these happenings that will end my tale, I find that it is hard for me to set down the words, for my heart goes back again to that time, and the shadow of the bereavement that was to come hangs above me even as it did at that sore time, so that my feelings stand in

the way of my narrative. I can see it all before me again—the yelling crowds, the notices pasted about, the crowded coach, the tidings of new ones accused, the beaten path up Gallows Hill—I can see it all. Belike you have come to know by this time that in truth I am no maker of fine tales, but only a plain man talking in this writing fashion to the youths and maidens whom I know; setting down the truth and naught else, and filled with love for my dear sister. I cannot make shift to think on those days now so as to tell you the events in their order, but only to bring you to the end of my poor tale as best I may.

We stayed in my father's house, I wandering ever through the dark halls and into the old rooms, and ever visiting my sister's chamber under the gable, where I would sit me down alone on the settle and think of her and pray for her deliverance. Then I would mind me of how she lay in her dark cell, and all my poor wits would

be sore confused. Each day I clomb sadly up the stairs into my dear sister's chamber, where were all the little signs of her—the Betty Lamp still standing near to the scrutoire where she had sate the night before we journeyed to Boston, and the wool-card that I had made her when but a small lad hanging on the wall, for the thought how I had carved it with my own small hands sat so tenderly on her maid's heart that she could ne'er make shift to use it. All these dumb things spake unto me verily as if they knew my plight, though they could ne'er speak so to Sir Harrenden, albeit I well knew he loved her mightily, but his was, perforce, a love with naught of ancient circumstance surrounding it, and no familiar memories. She was gone from both of us but leaving unto me in my misery, as she could ne'er leave unto him, those years of loving companionship to ponder over, and all the little signs of it to make me sad. Natheless, I doubt he was more worthily engaged in those days of our

affliction than myself was in so giving o'er to my grief, for he had set himself stoutly against taking any mind of the sure end, busying himself with brave efforts to avert it, though with little avail and with but slight hopes, as I well knew.

I tried to have him take speech with our good Dr. Hale anent the injury to his arm which he must still carry in a sling and which I knew troubled him sorely. But he would have none of it, saying that the provincial doctors and the whole tribe of colonial savages, as he named them, were bestead of superstition. Nor would he give o'er to my faring with him when he went forth upon his errands, saying I would only lay myself in danger of being cried out upon and condemned. I would watch for him as he came back, hoping to perceive some fair good sign in his countenance, but could read naught in it, save only a kind of grim resolve which seemed never to forsake him, albeit I could see aneath it his real fear. He had speech

of Judge Sewall and Mr. Saltonstall who tarried at Master Proctor's ordinary, but naught came of it; and then he despatched a messenger on horseback to Lord Bello-mont in New York beseeching him to interfere, though well I knew that such an embassy would avail naught, since the journey thither and back would be a full twelve days in the best way of it. One night, having been abroad in the afternoon, he paced to and fro in my poor father's study in a deep pondering, so that it seemed me he was busy with some fresh contrivance for my poor sister's safety. I mind me now how I bestowed myself on the settle watching him as he walked up and down, and anon gazed from the window, sometimes holding his poor arm for the sore pain that was in it. I did not dare to ask him what was toward, for I could see he was of no mind for discoursing. But early the next morning he went forth, remaining away that whole day, and coming back at nightfall, but vouchsafing no

words anent the matter of his doings when I strove to catechise him on it. I know now where he had been, and why he would say me naught concerning it, for I found out after many days and when he was gone back to London, that he had spent that day among the rough fishermen at Marblehead bespeaking their assistance with a goodly offer of reward, for an attack at midnight on the Salem jail to free my dear sister by unlawful force, since any lawful means thereto were wanting.

Truly did it show how desperate was he at last become, even as it showed the stout love he bore her. And, truly, too, did it sit nobly upon him that he would ne'er make known such a dangerous emprise unto me, her brother, for fear of bringing me under the law's swift vengeance.

But the plot, if indeed he made shift to contrive it and make the plans, came to naught, for the jail by night was stoutly guarded without by a full regiment of tithing-men and under sheriffs.

All this while, though he spake naught of it and e'en made stout denials thereof when any would charge him, did his wounded arm wax dangerously worse through neglectful usage and lack of rightful tendance. He slept naught and I could soon perceive how he was beset with fever, discoursing with himself after a strange fashion when he should bestow himself for some rest, though naught was vouchsafed him. It must have been about eight days after our coming to Salem, when I heard him one night outside my door and going forth with a candle I perceived him looking exceedingly strange.

"Sir Harrenden," says I, "What's to do? Thou'rt better in thy bed, at all events, for I trow thou'rt sore afflicted."

"Aye, lad," says he, "I'm going to Boston."

"Thou'dst best shorten thy journey to Dr. Hale's house; or let me summon him," says I.

"Nay, lad, I'm going to Boston. There's

no man in Salem will lend me a boat, knowing how I will use it, and the Marble-headers are afraid. I'm going out on the Vengeance to bespeak the governor if the Lord willeth; there's no more I may do here."

I could do naught with him but beseech him to take some rest, it being the more needful for his journey, which he could scarce go about till the morning. But he never set out, for when the morning was come the foe which had been stalking at his heels and to which in his sore extremity of grief he would give no heed, laid him low and our old servant set herself to caring for him as best she might.

Now all this time there were no tidings of His Excellency, though we had diligently inquired, and I feared me there was no hope in that direction even if he should arrive, for they had found some loophole in the new charter to let them act in such a case without him, so I knew that e'en should he be there, he could but console

us with his stout heart, but not turn the law in its course. He had sailed out, as I told you, to meet his treasure-laden *Nymph* of which he had tidings from some incoming vessel. This vessel had dropped her anchor somewhat out of Boston harbor, but where the royal governor was no man knew. Nor belike did any of the worthies give him a thought.

Thus twelve long days wore by, and there was dark silence and sadness in our house, and excitement and noise increasing all the while in the town without.

On the Friday, they hung Mistress Martha Corey and Bridget Bishop, who kept the Danvers tavern, and Mr. Burroughs. We could see from the window the solemn procession as it passed on its way to Gallows Hill, the tithing-men coming first, (and truly I hated them most of all, for they had ever stood in my way); then the ministers, and then the condemned, dragged along by the sheriffs with a great crowd at their heels. I thought of my

dear sister in her cell, how she had ne'er a friendly hand to take her own in the hour of her coming forth—of the chains weighing on her slight form, (for she was but a weak lass,) and of the crowd following her. Then I could think no more—only go by myself, or wander distracted through the dark house, and wring my hands and call down vengeance upon Mr. Cotton Mather, who was ever lurking in my mind as the cause of all that was passing in our village.

At last the day came. It was a fair day, for the blessed sun was shining; it was too fair a day for any to die in such fashion, and for a little the bright sun gave me hope; but it was not for long, for the law taketh no account of such things, as I very well knew. The names of them that were to suffer were posted up in public places the day before, according to the custom, and our old servant, going abroad for a little of the blessed air of Heaven, had seen my dear sister's with the rest. And

that is how we knew. She tried to console me, speaking somewhat of our meeting in the other world, but such talk seemed not to sit easily upon her, and it gave me no comfort, only causing me to shed tears, and so she gave over.

I had resolved to go to the hill, dreading to see the sight, but yet thinking that mayhap if she should be able to see me in the crowd, it might cheer her a bit and give her heart fresh courage for her fate. Sir Harrenden was now too ill to know aught of the matter. I found it in my heart to hope that he might die so instead of getting better only to know what had come to pass.

I will try to tell you the rest as best I may, but I doubt me 'twill be but a poor jumble, ill-arranged according to the ways of the learned writers.

They did not suffer my dear sister to drag her chains along, on account of her gentle breeding, mayhap; but they pulled her with two others in a cart, and three

more walked after it, being bound to it with their chains as cattle are led to the slaughter.

I followed the yelling crowd up the long hill where so much of our fair colony's life had been taken, until we came close upon the great, frowning gallows rising from a high platform on the very summit. I was all of a tremble as I watched the sheriffs making the rope ready, for I feared that Mercy might e'en be the first to die; but it was not so.

A roistering, brazen-looking rogue, walked up the steps with a strutting air, which seemed to me, in sooth, but a poor way to approach death, and stood on the platform.

"Wilt thou confess thy evil covenant—answer?" called out one of those near him, but I could not make out his reply, for the thought of my dear sister standing there presently in his stead on a sudden seemed to blot out all my senses. There came such a pounding noise in my head that I

could scarce see nor hear—indeed, I had scant desire to witness the scene. Howbeit I seemed to know as in a nightmarish dream of the dread work going apace on that grim scaffold. One after another was led forward, while the murmur of the throng sounded hoarse, like the beat of the waves on Marblehead strand. Then I was recalled with a start, which sent a cold sweat to my brow, by hearing a woman's shrill voice exclaim :

“ Oh, it is a maiden ; look, it is the Corwin lass ! ” And, looking toward the scaffold, I saw my sister Mercy going up the steps alone. I never saw her look so beautiful and so unworldly. Her face was very white, and she had on a white gown, very plain—one that I knew well and had never liked for its plainness, but now as I looked at her clad in it, it seemed to make her look like an angel before my eyes. She stood there looking up, and I knew her thoughts were not upon the eager crowd nor e'en on me nor anything in the world, but on higher

things, and she saw not those around her, They took her hair, her golden hair, and tied it above her head, leaving her neck bare. And then I felt as if a gauze were placed before my eyes, and all the crowd seemed to swim about me, and I stretched my two arms out and cried,

“Mercy !”

She saw me, smiled, and tried to extend her poor fettered hands toward me, but the rough hangman secured them behind her back, and made ready to slip the ugly rope about her neck.

At this there was a rustling in the crowd near me, and I thought it was on my account, seeing my sudden cry and strange demeanor, when I heard some one call in a protesting way,

“Nay, in whose name ?”

And some one else answered, “In the name of King William of Orange, and our gracious Queen !”

At that I looked behind me and saw the

crowd falling away and making room for some one to pass.

"Thou'lt give over there till I reach thee!" called a man in a gorgeous red uniform, coming down through the crowd with a drawn sword in his hand, and I knew he was bespeaking the sheriffs and hangmen. He came striding right past me where I stood all dazed, and, as he went by, I made out that he was some officer of the royal army, though what manner of one I did not know—only wondering even then where he came from, seeing that there were none of the king's troops in the province at that time.

"Belike he is from the ship anchored in Boston Harbor," quoth a man in the throng, when suddenly, glancing behind me to see if there were any more of them, I saw a sight that sent a thrill from my head to my feet. For following close after him there came another stalking down with much clanking and waving of his sword, and calling, "Make way for the King's royal gover-

nor!" and behind him I could see through my clouded eyes the little, straight, wiry figure of His Excellency, Sir William Phipps, coming after the soldier, with his quick, short step and his angry eyes fixed straight ahead of him on the scaffold. I tried to catch his eye, but could not, and I could only cry with a great sob in my throat:

"Your Excellency! My sister—Mercy!"

But he paid no heed to me, only walking straight after the red-coated soldier, who was clearing the way for him to pass. As he brushed by me I could see that his little, wizened, brown, weather-beaten face was all screwed up so that it was nothing but lines and furrows, and his lips were closed tight like the jaws of a vice. He had on all his sea trappings, and on his finger, as he passed, I could see a goodly sized precious stone of a lustrous hue, set in a fine ring of Spanish gold, and I knew the galleon's treasure had been safely brought to harbor.

Up the steps of the scaffold he went, and I could hear the thump, thump, thump, of his boots as the flimsy wooden structure shook under his sturdy tread. And then he did what I hoped he would do, and what my poor dullard's brain might have known he would do. He stalked straight across the platform and took my sister by the hand. And then in a voice that rolled out like thunder and with an oath that I would not dare to set down here, he ordered the hangmen and sheriffs down the steps. They knew him too well, even from his face, to disobey the order, and they slunk off the platform one after the other. And there stood the little governor as I had seen him stand on the deck of his vessel, and some in the crowd whose hearts, mayhap, were overjoyed like mine, began to cheer. And then it was borne in on me that in very truth there is no weapon or armor like unto a sturdy character, for I'll warrant the whole crowd of high and mighty officials—of tithing-men and sher-

iffs and magistrates and godly ministers—about the scaffold, were trembling in their gaiters at this one little, war-scorched, wrinkled man whose anger they now dreaded like the eternal fire they preached.

“If there be any here among ye,” says he, looking about him and speaking in a thundering voice, “who have any defense for these murders, he can make them before His Majesty’s High Court in London, and we’ll let the lawyers and statesmen there pick the charter to pieces and quarrel over its points and provisions, and mayhap decide withal whether brazen murder is to be legal in His Majesty’s Province! Howbeit, there’ll be no more hangings this day, nor the next after it—and thou’rt reprieved by the King, my lass!”

And so saying, he came down off the platform in a dead silence, leading my sister Mercy with him and beckoning the two red-coated soldiers to get out of his way. You may be sure that I pushed and elbowed my way till I came before them and

they saw me. I was too full of joy to speak, and could only take the governor's brown hand that he held out and stand there like a fool.

"Well, Determined," says he, "we'll put in at thy father's house and have a little reckoning in the matter of talk, for there'll be a mort of it to do on both sides, I'll warrant. These regulars lately landed in Boston to lend me a hand's turn with the Indians, and we'll soon pack some of these witch-hunting worthies over to England for making free to interpret His Majesty's charter without so much as consulting the royal governor. How's Sir Harrenden?"

There was much to see in that crowd as its members dispersed and took their ways—the angry protests of some among themselves, the cheering of others; but I saw naught nor heard aught, only embracing my dear sister who had come out of the very jaws of death and thinking only on her.

"And Sir Edward Low?" I finally asked

the governor as we made our way along down the beaten path that they now call the witch's road.

"Avast there!" says His Excellency. "I wish these poor wretches might have been hauled up in as good a cause. Why, he and his men are dangling on Nix's Isle in the harbor where a-many of his roving brethren have been hauled up before him in the days when stealing was somewhat in a bad countenance in Boston—and we'll try to bring in the fashion against it over again, mayhap."

I will not burden you by recounting how many of the Boston worthies were sent to England for trial of their presumptuous act, how the judges were made to pay heavy fines by the King's order, how Judge Sewall died in remorse, repenting of his stern sentences and e'en chiding himself with murder. And I will not tell you how the governor made his trip from Boston with the two regulars in a chaise cart, as

soon as he was landed, and heard of the goings on in Salem town. Nor will I tell you how Sir William Phipps went on shocking our province with his worldliness and my good Lady Phipps by encouraging the maidens in the abominable fashions of ungodly London. During her stay among us parties and festivals were often carried on with much gayety as late as twelve o'clock, gorgeous headgear and such furbishings were worn with a brazen carriage, and the lasses of Boston began to wear their hair in "heart-breakers" in spite of the law against it. And I will not weary you now by telling you how the dreadful delusion died away leaving a mort of sadness and grief in many of our lowly homes, for all that you can find, an you care to look for it, in the books of more learned ones than I. The blot of it is ever upon this fair town which I do e'en still love for it is my own home where I was born.

You will know now, my fair young miss, the reason why your grandmother,

e'en in the face of all your pretty pleadings, will ne'er give o'er and let you wear the old flowered silk gown which you have the brazen face to tell me sits so favorably on ye. And I'll warrant she will ne'er be wheedled into the doing it, without my own consent, which I'll not be cajoled into giving. For I'll not see that precious gown flaunted forth till midnight in treasonable assemblies, seeing how whilom it was worn by e'en a fairer lass than thou—and withal a loyal subject of the Crown!

After the scene I have just narrated for you, we made our way to my father's house, my dear sister and I going hand in hand, and the little royal governor coming along behind us, all smiling. As we drew near to the house, he called ahead for me to lay to and have a word with him, telling my sister to go on and enter the house alone. For the tenderness between Sir Harrenden and my sister Mercy seemed ever in his mind, which withal was a little

strange to me, seeing his blunt, plain manner in his dealings and discoursings with men.

So I never rightly came by a full knowledge of Sir Harrenden's surprise at seeing my sister, nor the fashion of their meeting. Only this I know, that indeed there seemed some witchery in the swift mending of Sir Harrenden's malady, for the fever left him so suddenly—being after all, I doubt, more of his head than of the wound in his arm—that 'twas not many days thereafter before he was jibing and jesting with the governor as had ever been his fashion, and seeming quite the gay gentleman again and even more the tender lover.

Most of you youths and maidens know old Sir Harrenden now and the fair, gray-haired Lady Orkney, who sent me a missive only this very day to visit her in their fair home in the rich country outside of Boston, chiding me, as she ever will with being still an old royalist, and luring her very grandchildren here to Salem town to

listen to these memories of our first governor under the new charter, and of the days when I was but a lad. And Sir Harrenden, still gorgeously bedizened, who, I'll warrant me, is close onto ninety-one years old and like to sojourn in this world forever, for aught that I can see, sayeth that I'm only a wild-minded, adventurous youngster of eighty-one, but hopes that mayhap I will sober down a little, for my sister's sake, when I come, in truth, to be a man.

THE END.





